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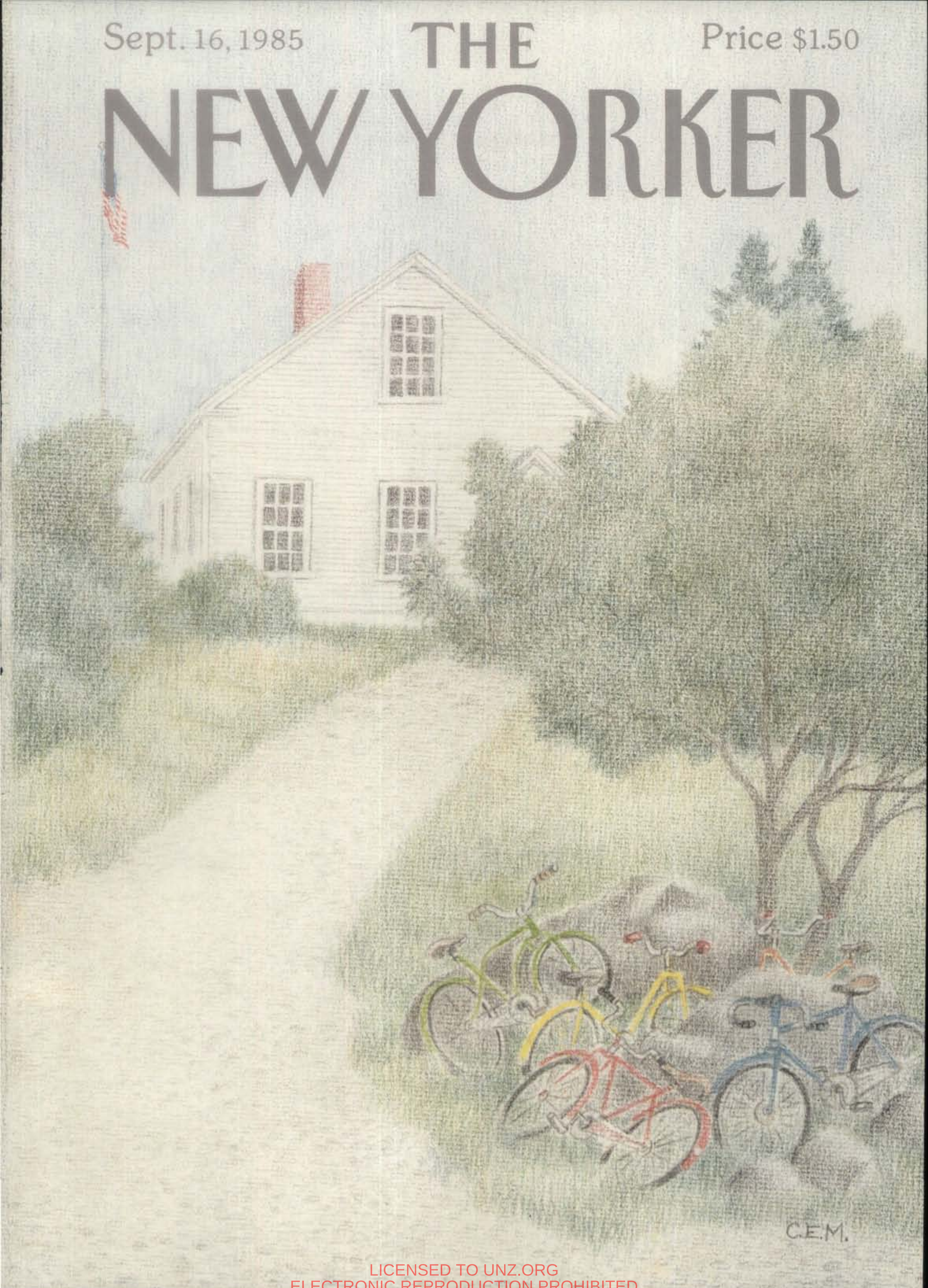

ESPRIT

Anne Terlunen
Esprit/Germany Accessories Coordinator
Age: 23

Some people think I look like a chicken. When I was little I thought *that soap smelled so good that I had* to eat it, but it didn't taste good. I like the idea of marriage, but not soon, and I'll have children because I'm a woman. Even though I work in Germany, I live in Holland on the weekends with my boyfriend because there is a really special atmosphere there. I want everything to be fragile.

Photo: Toscani

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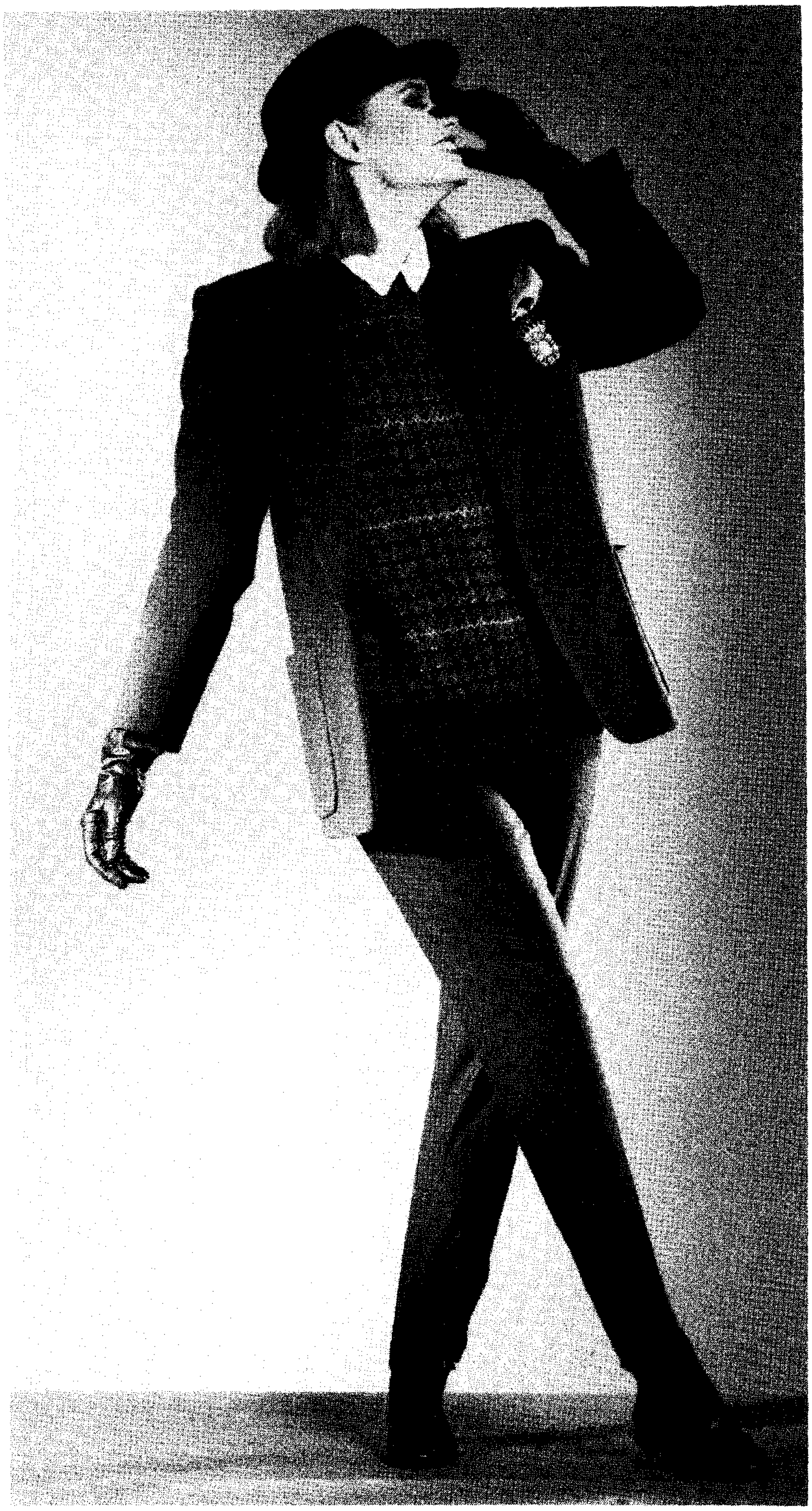

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

As Is—This touching play by William M. Hoffman concerns a personable young homosexual who is afflicted with AIDS, and is also a documentary of sorts about his milieu in this city. The lively, impressionistic performance was directed by Marshall W. Mason, and the acting by the large cast, several of whom appear in multiple roles, is just right. With Jonathan Hogan and Jonathan Hadary. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/25/85.) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Big River—A musical version of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Twain's great novel has been respectfully dealt with in a book by William Hauptman, with music and lyrics by Roger Miller. Daniel H. Jenkins plays Huck, Ron Richardson plays Jim, and Clint Allen plays Tom. Heidi Landesman has provided an unusually evocative setting—somehow, she has managed to put the Mississippi River on a stage. (5/13/85) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Biloxi Blues—A comedy that verges on autohagiography, the hero being the author, Neil Simon, as a young Army draftee who, in 1943, is struggling to assume the mantle of writer. (4/8/85) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Curse of the Starving Class—A revival of Sam Shepard's brilliant, humorous, passionate play, with a fine performance by Kathy Bates, as the mother of the family under examination. (9/2/85) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.)

Dames at Sea—A revival of a musical by Jim Wise (score) and George Haimsohn and Robin Miller (book and lyrics). (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Doubles—The scene is a locker room in a tennis club in Connecticut, where four men undress *and dress and undress while they talk over* their more or less miserable lives. This is a comedy. The author is David Wiltse. (5/20/85) (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

The Flatbush Faithful—A story of four friends that opens in the mid-forties (at Ebbets Field) and continues into the eighties. The first act is good, but from then on, in vignette after vignette, the play slips away. Gene Nye was both playwright and director. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

I'm Not Rappaport—Herb Gardner's rather synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park is given an expert performance by Cleavon Little and Judd Hirsch. (6/17/85) (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 869-4731. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Gilbert and Sullivan's **H.M.S. PINAFORE:** Wednesday, Sept. 11, at 2 and 8; Thursday and Friday, Sept. 12-13, at 8; Saturday, Sept. 14, at 3:30 and 8; and Sunday, Sept. 15, at 3:30. . . . ¶ Lehár's **THE MERRY WIDOW:** Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 21-22, at 3:30 and 8. (Norman Thomas, 111 E. 33rd St. 532-6180.)

Mayor—A musical based on the best-seller of the same name by Edward I. Koch. With a score and lyrics by Charles Strouse and a book by Warren Leight. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292. Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2:30 and 5:30.)

Negro Ensemble Company—A rather beguiling, if lightweight, farce by the Jamaican playwright Trevor Rhone, **TWO CAN PLAY** is about a middle-aged Jamaican couple. The husband is a blowhard; the wife is put-upon in every way, until she flies to Miami and comes back a changed woman. The first act is too intricate for its own good, but the second act is clear and funny. The actors—Hazel J. Medina and Sullivan H. Walker—couldn't be better. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Sept. 29.)

The Normal Heart—An interminable, trashy, non-play about AIDS, and its victims in the homosexual community of this city, who are compared to the Jews under the Nazis. The names Hitler, Roosevelt, Morgenthau, and, eventually, Mayor Koch are dropped with equal contempt. The evening is an insult to its audience and, what is far more serious, to the sufferers from this dreadful, seemingly hopeless disease. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Odd Couple—Neil Simon has turned his successful comedy of twenty years ago, which was about a couple of male bachelors, into an unsuccessful comedy about a couple of female bachelors. The cast is headed by Sally Struthers and Rita Moreno. (6/24/85) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Orphans—A melodrama, by Lyle Kessler, about two young brothers—one a street thief and pickpocket, the other an apparent dimwit—and an older mobster who takes over their house and their lives. The first act works quite well, the second is merely serviceable, but what really counts is the performance, under the dynamic direction of Gary Sinise. The actors are Kevin Anderson, Terry Kinney, and John Mahoney, and the show is an import from the Steppenwolf Company of Chicago. (5/20/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Penn & Teller—A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (5/6/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Singin' in the Rain—What could be more bizarre

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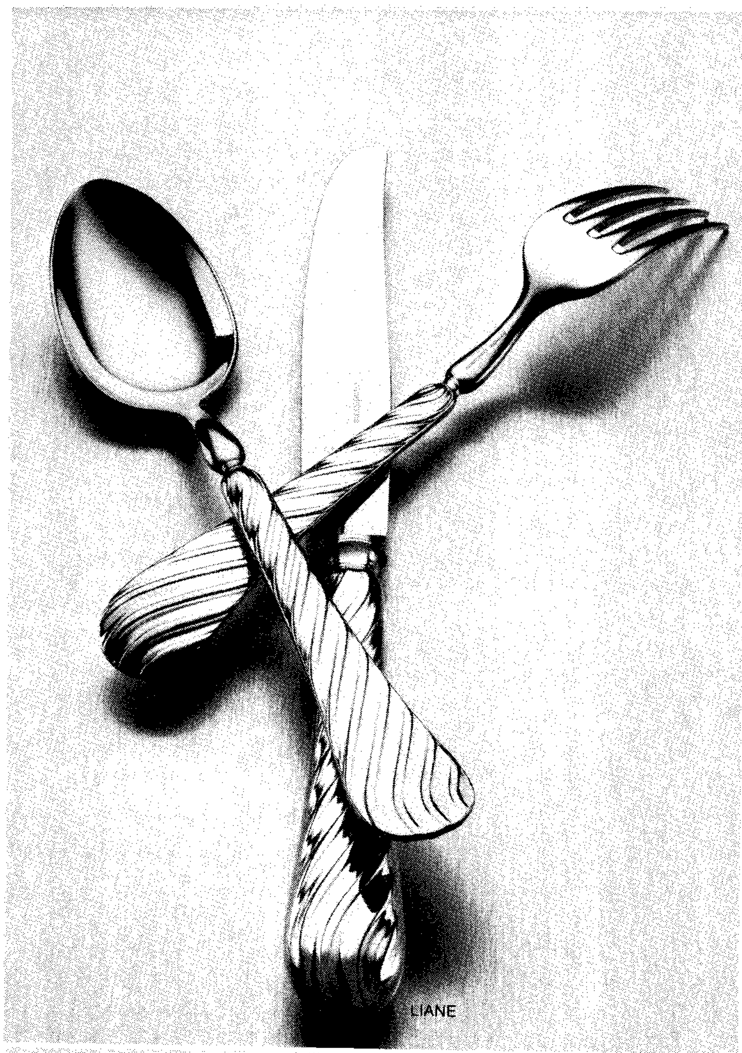

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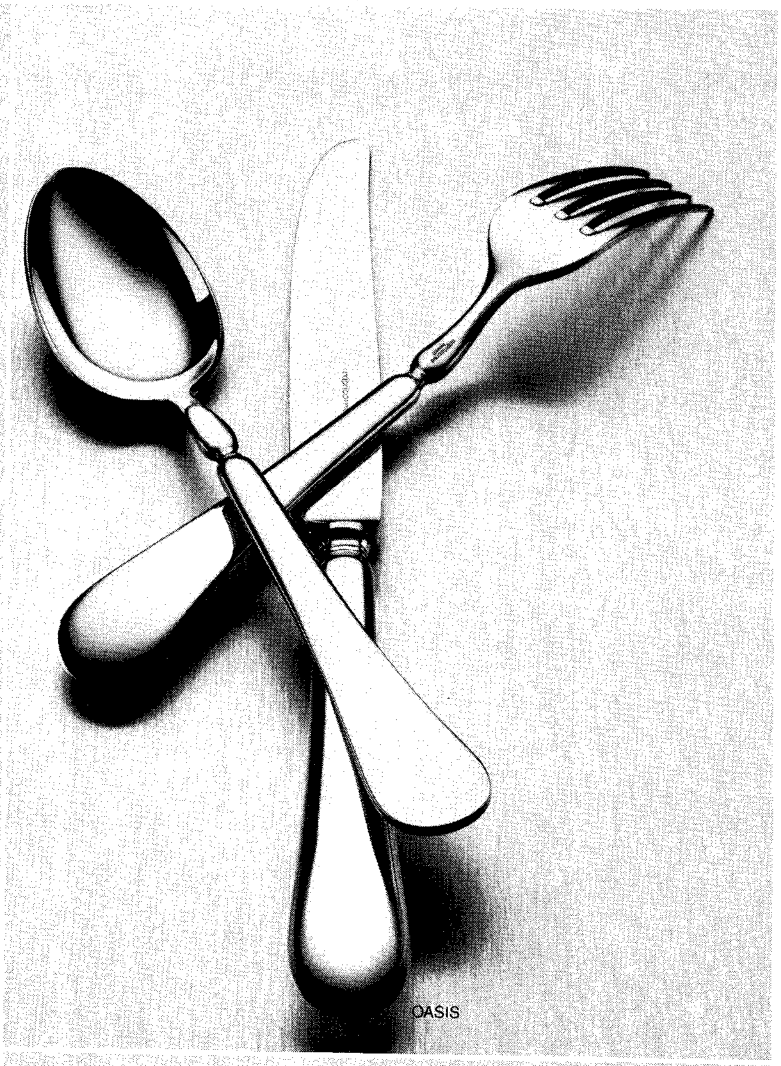

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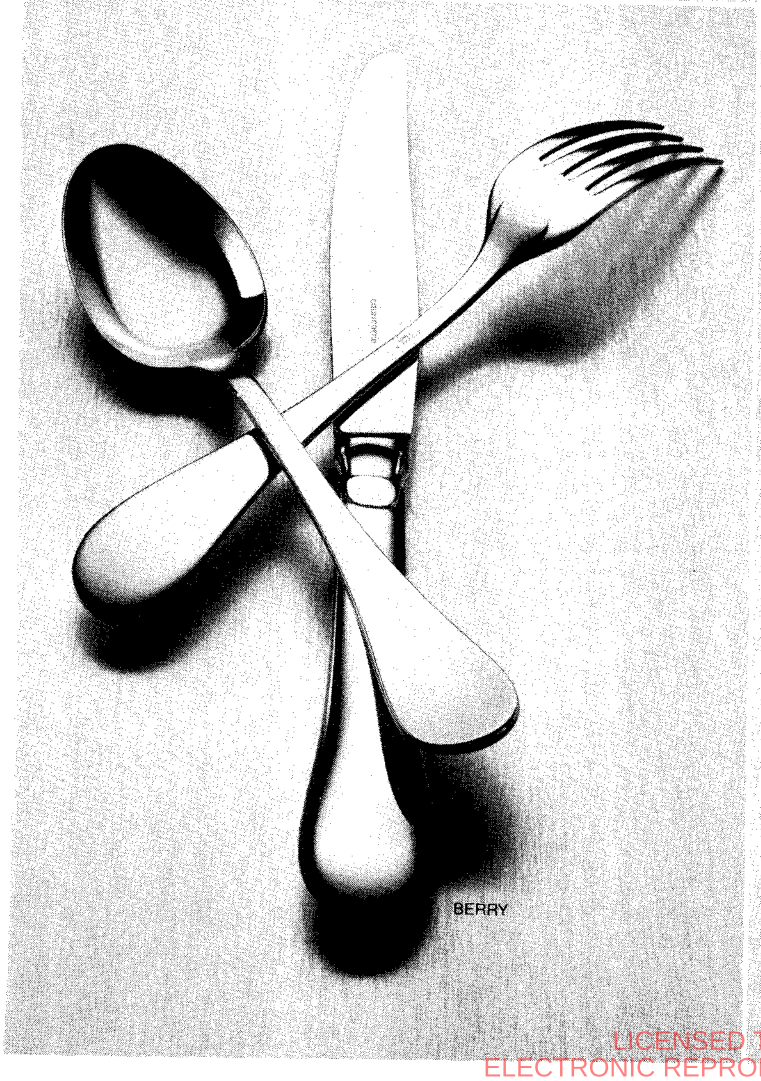

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

than an effortful re-creation onstage of what a movie once did with consummate ease and grace? Twyla Tharp has directed and choreographed this sad, enormous oddity. (7/15/85) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Song and Dance—A British musical composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber, with lyrics by Don Black, and starring Bernadette Peters. Richard Maltby, Jr., is the director. Previews through Tuesday, Sept. 17. Opens officially on Wednesday, Sept. 18. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Thursday, Sept. 19, and Saturday, Sept. 21, at 2.)

What's a Nice Country Like You... Doing in a State Like This?—An updated version of the 1973 satirical revue by the original creators, composer Cary Hoffman and lyricist Ira Gasman. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS:** A remembrance of things past, by Neil Simon. The hero is a sex-obsessed fifteen-year-old. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A dazzling production of a musical that has little wit and a lot of phony sentimentality about the tenderhearted family life of homosexuals. The music, by Jerry Herman, is Broadway-romantic. The two stars are Van Johnson and Walter Charles. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **CATS:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 10,560 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **FOOL FOR LOVE:** Sam Shepard's play—mysterious, funny, and beautiful—is about two battling, loving lovers in a motel room at the edge of the Mojave Desert, and about many other matters as well. Mr. Shepard directed. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 5. Closes Sunday, Sept. 29.) . . . **THE FOREIGNER:** A very funny play by Larry Shue, with good performances by every single member of the company, most notably by Kevin Geer as a lovable half-wit. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St., near Astor Pl. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE:** Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine have invented a highly entertaining musical about Georges Seurat and his celebrated painting of the island of La Grande Jatte. Mandy Patinkin is Seurat and Maryann Plunkett is Seurat's model and mistress. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

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MISCELLANY

Forbidden Broadway 1985—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

DANCE

American Ballet Theatre—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 11-12, at 8, and Sunday, Sept. 15, at 2 and 8: "Giselle." . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 13, at 8: "La Bayadère," "Other Dances," "Duets," and "Theme and Variations." . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 14, at 8:30: "La Bayadère," "Jardin aux Lilas," "Grand Pas Classique," and "Theme and Variations." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Trisha Brown Company—A one-week engagement—Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 7:30, and Thursday, Sept. 19, and Saturday, Sept. 21, at 8: "Glacial Decoy," "Accumulation," and "Lateral Pass" (New York première). . . . ¶ Wednesday, Sept. 18, and Friday, Sept. 20, at 8, and Sunday, Sept. 22, at 3: "Opal Loop," "Son of Gone Fishin'," and "Set and Reset." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

India Festival of Music and Dance—Thirty-six dancers and musicians from India presenting both classical and modern works. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Wednesday through Friday, Sept. 11-13, at 8; Saturday, Sept. 14, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Sept. 15, at 2.)

Pat Catterson—Presenting "Please, Just Take It One Life at a Time," a full-length work. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 20-21, at 8, and Sunday, Sept. 22, at 7. For tickets, call 924-0077.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JULIE WILSON,** a wonderful non-self-indulgent singer whose interpretations of Porter, Sondheim, Gershwin, or whomever are done with verve and conviction, reigns in the Oak Room Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—Jazz in a lively Chelsea bar and restaurant bedecked with nautical stuff. Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 11-12, the **VERNEL FOURNIER** trio; Friday and Saturday, Sept. 13-14, the Richard Schulman trio; Sunday, Sept. 15, the Barbara Berlind trio; Tuesday, Sept. 17, the Kellis Ethridge quartet; Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 18-19, the **HAROLD OUSLEY** quartet; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 20-21, the **SCOTT HAMILTON** quintet. Monday night is jam-session night, with Mark Morganelli. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A dark, large, carpeted club with deep-blue tablecloths and a curvy bar. Two terrific Latin-jazz bands, **MONGO SANTAMARIA'S** and **PAQUITO D'RIVERA'S,** hold forth until Sunday, Sept. 15; Monday, Sept. 16, will be devoted to the **PAUL WEST** All-Stars; and on Tuesday, Sept. 17, altoist **PHIL WOODS** will bring in a quintet and singer Laurel Massé will come in with her backing crew. Sets begin after nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A large-venue pop, rock, folk, and jazz club with, thank heavens, tables and chairs. **TOWER OF POWER** and Alan Havey through Saturday, Sept. 14, and Thursday through Sunday, Sept. 19-22, a presentation of a musical, "Just Once," based on songs by Cynthia Weil and Barry Mann. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A real New York bar; it has dark wood panelling, Type-A conversationalists, and some very good piano-bass teams. **TOMMY FLANAGAN** and **GEORGE MRAZ** work through Saturday, Sept. 14; **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and Santi Debriano will play on Sunday, Sept. 15; and **JOHN HICKS** will come in with **MICKEY BASS** on Monday, Sept. 16. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle is a cozy, elegant room where you can hear **STEVE ROSS** singing at the piano Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. Dining. . . . ¶ Over in the Bemelmans Bar, pianist **BARBARA CARROLL** is back, singing and soloing Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-forty-five.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered, splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too. Monday is showcase night. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

Chinese Tea Room, formerly Carnegie Tavern, 165 W. 56th St. (757-9522)—**ELLIS LARKINS** is ensconced here, out of the way of the scaffolding outside. His delicate, elegant solos, performed for hushed, attentive audiences, are, at times, encased in very short sets. Music nightly, except Sundays, from eight to midnight. Dining.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A velvet-and-mirror-walled downstairs music room. **JOE HENDERSON'S** fine quartet—**JOANNE BRACKEEN, RUFUS REID,** and **AL FOSTER**—is here through Sunday, Sept. 15, and Thursday through Sunday, Sept. 19-22, **KENNY RANKIN,** the pleasant pop-jazz folkie, will be on the stand. Mondays are the property of guitarist **LES PAUL'S** trio. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight. Dining.

Folk City, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—The schedule: Wednesday, Sept. 11, Wind, Animation, and the Myra Holder band; Thursday, Sept. 12, Daniel Gerber, Ellwood Earl, Tom Dickie, and Danny Sachs; Friday, Sept. 13, **KINVARA,** an Irish outfit; Tuesday, Sept. 17, Alicia Carrie, Mark Bradley, and the Bluejays; Wednesday, Sept. 18,

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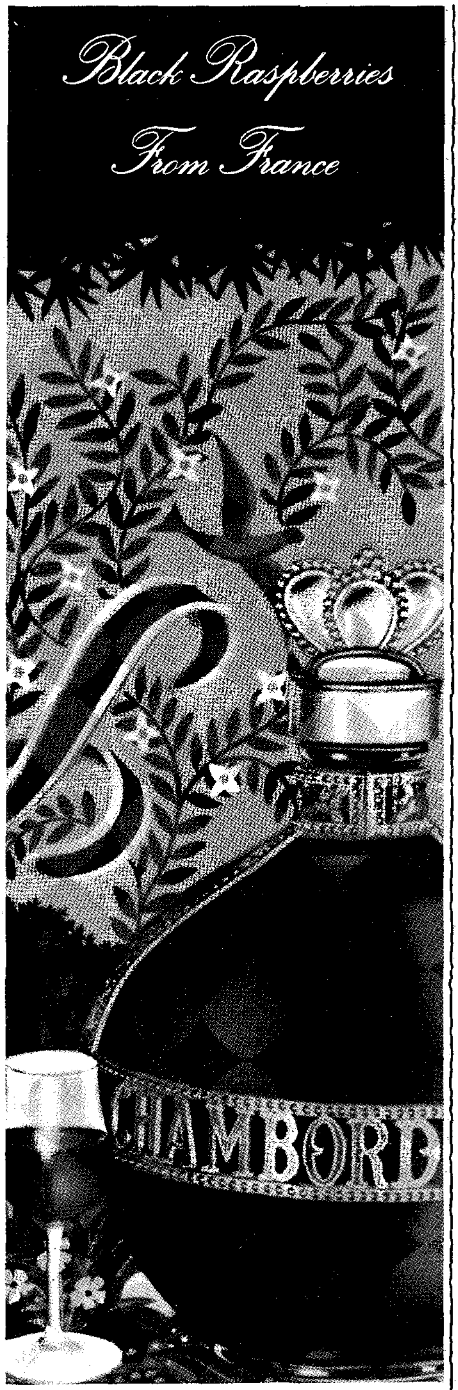

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Casselberry & Dupree; Thursday, Sept. 19, a songwriters' showcase; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 20-21, a "Songwriter Celebration," with established songwriters, such as Christine Lavin, Carolyne Mas, and Aztec Two-Step. Shows usually begin at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Alicia Sherman sings with Peter Madsen and Phil Bowler Wednesdays through Saturdays; Sundays, **BROOKS KERR** sings and plays piano; on Mondays, pianist Baba Motta and bassist John Belzaguy team up; and Tuesdays belong to guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE'S** trio. All these groups begin about ten.

HANRATTY'S, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A spiffy back-room haunt for traditional-jazz pianists and their admirers. Henry Francis, a part-time research scientist and a part-time stride pianist, experiments at the keyboard through Saturday, Sept. 14, and on Tuesday, Sept. 17, **DAVE MC KENNA,** a pumping, swirling time-warp of a pianist—he plays stride with his left hand and bebop with his right—will take charge. Sundays are claimed by Keith MacDonald, and Mondays by John Colianni. Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER SALOON, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A nice room with a piano-bass policy. The pianists and bassists: **CEDAR WALTON** and **RON CARTER** through Saturday, Sept. 14, and starting Tuesday, Sept. 17, **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA.** Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—You can tell you're in New York and not in Texas: when they serve you a hamburger, they bring a jar of Dijon mustard along with it. Wednesday, Sept. 11, power pop from the fifties with the Ventures, along with Joey Miserable & the Worms; Thursday, Sept. 12, the Vipers and the Raunch Hands; Sunday, Sept. 15, **MEMPHIS SLIM,** the pride of Paris, loving piano walloper (he's also been known to play the blues on a harpsichord), pleasantly piercing baritone, and blues composer (he wrote "Mother Earth," a classic), and the **LEGENDARY BLUES BAND,** which features pianist **PINETOP PERKINS;** and Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 17-18, Denny Laine, Steve Holley, Lindsey Bridgewater, and Joe Hubbard. Music after nine nightly. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—"The Roots of American Jazz," with Eddy Davis & the Turn of the Century Minstrels, a celebration of New Orleans jazz, can be heard through Saturday, Sept. 14, and on Tuesday, Sept. 17, **KAYE BALLARD** and **ARTHUR SIEGEL** will arrive to sing a salute to lyricist E. Y. (Yip) Harburg. Music at nine and eleven. On Monday nights from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen is likely to show up to play celebrity clarinet with a New Orleans-style sextet. Dining. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A longtime music hangout on the upper West Side. The musicians: Thursday, Sept. 12, Roland Vazquez; Friday and Saturday, Sept. 13-14, the **MILT JACKSON–RAY BROWN** quartet; Monday, Sept. 16, **JUMP STREET;** Tuesday, Sept. 17, the Frank Camino quintet; Wednesday, Sept. 18, saxophonist **ARTHUR RHAMES;** and Thursday, Sept. 19, Jeff Franzel. Music from about ten. Dining.

RAINBOW ROOM, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—**PANAMA FRANCIS,** the savvy jazz and fifties rock-and-roll drummer who has in his career worked with Lucky Millinder, Sammy Price, Cab Calloway, and Dinah Shore, heads up his totally swinging combo, the **SAVOY SULTANS,** for listening and Lindying Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one; Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two; and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—The mostly rock-and-roll roster: Saturday, Sept. 14, the Weathergirls; Monday, Sept. 16, Subject Object; Wednesday, Sept. 18, **LONE JUSTICE,** a lively L.A. band; and Thursday and Friday, Sept. 19-20, King. Shows begin after nine Mondays through Thursdays, and after eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dancing.

SEVENTH AVENUE SOUTH, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—The jazz, jazz-rock, and R. & B. schedule: Wednesday, Sept. 11, trumpeter Tex Allen; Thursday, Sept. 12, Scott Robinson; Friday, Sept. 13, R. & B.-ists **WHO IT IS;** Sunday, Sept. 15, guitarist **BARRY FINNERTY;** Wednesday, Sept. 18, Brazuca; Thursday, Sept. 19, New Brazil; and Friday and Saturday, Sept. 20-21, Batucada. Music from nine-thirty.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great place to listen to mostly Brazilian music—Brazilian-jazz groups, samba bands, reggae bands, and all-percussion ensembles that perform *carnaval* music—and it tends to be swirling, heady, wonderful stuff. On its busy weekends, the club feels like the rush hour in Rio. Wednesday, Sept. 11, **MARIO RIVERA & THE SALSA REFUGEES;** Thursday, Sept. 12, reggae-ist **PABLO MOSES & THE REVOLUTIONARY DREAM BAND;** Friday and Saturday, Sept. 13-14, **PÉ-DE-BOI;** Sunday, Sept. 15, Messe Caline; Wednesday, Sept. 18, Wilfrido Vargas; Thursday, Sept. 19, **RAS MICHAEL & THE ONE VIBRATION** reggae band; Friday, Sept. 20, Tabou Combo; and Saturday, Sept. 21, **MIKATA.** Music from ten. Dining. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—This knotty-pine night club keeps bringing in proven jazz players, and the place keeps on being crowded. Pianist **MC COY TYNER** leads his trio through Sunday, Sept. 15, and on Tuesday, Sept. 17, tenor saxophonist, flutist, humorist, and singer **JAMES MOODY** will come in with his quartet. Mondays are **GIL EVANS** nights: when his experienced (trumpeter **LEW SOLOFF,** tenor saxophonist **GEORGE ADAMS,** and **HOWARD JOHNSON** on baritone sax and tuba, among others), smiling, and unjaded **BIG BAND,** with its unmistakable Evansian blur of instruments, plays Charlie Parker tunes on top of a heavy rock beat, it sounds like bebop march music. Shows from about ten. Dining.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the big downstairs room, there's salsa on the bandstand and electricity in the air after nine on Mondays: on Sept. 16, **OSCAR D'LEON, JOSÉ ALBERTO,** and trombonist **STEVE TURRE,** the guest jazz soloist, will all be present. On Friday and Saturday, Sept. 13-14, there will be a salute to the late New Orleans pianist Professor Longhair by **DR. JOHN** and his satisfyingly *haute*-raunch gutbucket band and by composer and pianist **ALLEN TOUSSAINT.** On Friday, Sept. 20, singer and pianist **NINA SIMONE** will begin a ten-night visit. Shows at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ Meanwhile, out on the Terrace, **HILTON RUIZ,** a driving bop pianist, performs every night but Monday. Jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** is also present on Tuesdays. Music from nine-thirty.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now fifty years old, has been described by Max Gordon, the wise proprietor and resident father figure, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." Guitarist **LARRY CORYELL** works with guitarist **EMILY REMLER,** bassist **BUSTER WILLIAMS,** and drummer **BILLY HART** through Sunday, Sept. 15; on Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 16-17, the **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND** will be in charge; and on Wednesday, Sept. 18, pianist **HERBIE HANCOCK,** bassist **RON CARTER,** and drummer **TONY WILLIAMS** will begin a reunion that will, no doubt, cause long lines up the stairs and out onto the sidewalk. Music from ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food, beyond the pinball machines is a room full of swing music, Latin jazz, and hard bop. Trombonist **JIMMY KNEPPER** heads up a quintet through Monday, Sept. 16, and on Tuesday, Sept. 17, tenor saxophonist **BIG NICK NICHOLAS** will move in with a quintet. Music from about nine.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A speakeasy in the twenties, Reno Sweeney in the seventies, this ground-floor town-house space is now a SoHo-sleek and spacious bar and restaurant with a musical passageway between them. **HAL SCHAEFER** and **HARVIE SWARTZ** play piano-bass duets through Saturday, Sept. 14; starting Tuesday, Sept. 17, pianist **JANE JARVIS** and bassist **MILT HINTON** will settle in for a week. Sunday's music is provided by longtime colleagues guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE,** who play beautiful and swinging chamber jazz. The Monday musicians are bassist Brian Torff and pianist

Jim Roberts. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Frank Sinatra—With Pete Barbutti. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Wednesday through Saturday, Sept. 11-14, at 8.)

"Thomas Cole, a Waking Dream"—A theatrical music piece, with a score by Henry Threadgill, performed by the New York Art Theatre Institute and Mr. Threadgill's octet. (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Wednesday through Saturday, Sept. 11-14, at 8, and Sunday, Sept. 15, at 3.)

Foreigner—With Joe Walsh. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Thursday, Sept. 12, at 8.)

Bryan Adams—With Cock Robin. (Madison Square Garden. Saturday, Sept. 14, at 8.)

Judy Carmichael—Carnegie Recital Hall. 247-7800. Saturday, Sept. 14, at 8:30.

Shirley Bassey—With George Shearing and Don Thompson. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 17-18, at 8.)

Phylicia Ayers-Allen—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 8.

Heart—With Go West. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Saturday, Sept. 21, at 8.)

James Brown—With Eddie Kendricks and David Ruffin. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 787-1477. Saturday, Sept. 21, at 8 and midnight.)

Pat Moraz and Bill Bruford—Town Hall. Saturday, Sept. 21, at 8.

Jazz Center of New York—Saturday, Sept. 14: Oliver Lake–Joseph Jarman quintet. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 20: Bryan Carrott quintet. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 21: Fred Houn & the Afro-Asian Music Ensemble. (380 Lafayette St. 505-5660. Shows at 9 and 10:30.)

Irving Plaza—Friday, Sept. 13: Translator and Persian Gulf. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 14: Richard Lloyd and the Nightmares. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Sept. 17: Violent Femmes, Beat Rodeo, Alex Chilton, the Raunch Hands, and Frank Maya. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Sept. 18: Marshall Crenshaw, the Ben Vaughn combo, the Smithereens, and the Beau Brummels. . . . ¶ Thursday, Sept. 19: David Johansen, Carolyne Mas, Johnny Copeland, and the Vipers. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 477-3728. Shows start after 9.)

Benefit Program—Folksinger Ronnie Gilbert, jazz musicians Sheila Jordan and Harvie Swartz, comedian Steve Ben Israel, and others performing for the benefit of the Volunteer Stroke Rehabilitation Program. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Wednesday, Sept. 18, at 8.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Niki de Saint Phalle—Large sculptures, cast in polyester and painted with acrylic, of figures from tarot cards; for instance, the Devil, Death, and Temperance. Through Oct. 5. (Gimpel, 1040 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Stephanus Heidacker—Ponderous, almost architectural human figures painted in smooth, thick oils by a young German, new to this country. First one-man show in New York. Through Oct. 5. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Michael Heizer—Paintings, sculptures, drawings, and photographs related to this Conceptualist's earthworks. Through Saturday, Sept. 14. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

Justen Ladda—Works in mixed mediums by an artist who has a quirky perspective on things—Dürer's famous praying hands, for example, are reproduced in a six-and-a-half-foot, three-dimensional sculpture made up of soap-and-detergent boxes, which are artfully pieced together and painted so that one suddenly sees them the way Mr. Ladda does, as hands being washed rather than at prayer. Through Oct. 12. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Doug Maguire—Oil landscape paintings. Through Oct. 2. (Perlow, formerly Sachs Art Gallery, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

David Park (1911-60)—Figurative and still-life works done in oil, gouache, and ink on pa-

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

per. Through Oct. 26. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

Anne Poor—Recent oils and works on paper by an artist who treats utility poles and power lines with the same delicacy and tenderness she lavishes on the petunias, daisies, and field flowers that occupy most of her attention. Through Oct. 5. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Fairfield Porter (1907-75)—Paintings reflecting the placid life of the Hamptons in summer, plus a couple of sharply contrasting drawings of hurly-burly in the city. Through Sept. 28. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Egon Schiele (1890-1918)—Seventeen oils or gouaches, varnished like violins, by this Austrian Expressionist. The subjects include figures, landscapes, and boats. Through Oct.12. (Sabarsky, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Opens at noon.)

Vladimir Zakrzewski—Squares, circles, and arches appear in series in these abstract paintings, drawings, and works on paper. Through Oct. 5. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Ben-Zion—Approximately thirty-five iron sculptures of semi-abstract animal forms and African tribal masks. Through Sept. 28. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Ian Hornak / David Graham—Sixteen landscape paintings extending onto the painted frames that surround them. / Color photographs that capture some peculiar sites in America; for example, monumental fish sculptures in a playground, and an airplane's tail section jutting out of a roof. Through Oct. 2. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

Morris Louis (1912-62)—Thirteen large abstract paintings completed in the last years of the artist's life. Through Sept. 28. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Philip Mullen—Abstract paintings. Through Oct. 5. (David Findlay, Jr., 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Bernard Tschumi—Preparatory sketches and drawings by the chief architect of the Parc de la Villette, in Paris. Through Sept. 28. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

Philip Tsiaras and Heinrich Nicolaus—Neo-Expressionistic figures painted on various surfaces, including thin cotton strips and wood panels, done as individual works and in collaboration. Through Oct. 5. (Getler-Saper, 50 W. 57th St.)

Abstract/Issues—A three-part show of abstract paintings by thirty artists, Sean Scully, Clinton Storm, Edda Renouf, Osvaldo Romberg, Susan Laifer, and Julie Gross among them. Through Sept. 28. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. . . . ¶ French, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays. . . . ¶ Oscarsson Hood, 41 W. 57th St.)

Group Show—Oil paintings and works on paper dealing with dreams and fantasies, in a show selected by John Bernard Myers. Through Oct. 2. (Fishbach, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Frederick Childs—Paintings of solitary figures cooped up in cheerless quarters. One of them is peeking through a keyhole. First one-man show in New York. Through Oct. 5. (Brown, 100 Greene St.)

Robert Donley—Caricature paintings of city life in New York. Through Oct. 8. (Knowlton, 153 Mercer St.)

Douglas Florian—Abstract oil paintings by an artist who has contributed drawings to this magazine. Through Sept. 28. (22 Wooster Gallery. Opens at noon.)

Ronnie Landfield—Abstract acrylic paintings on paper. Through Sept. 28. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Sabina Ott / Ron Nagle—Large diptychs, painted in bold colors and with brisk brushwork, that often juxtapose unlikely pairs—a cello and a whirling galaxy, for instance. / Small, concise ceramic sculptures whose rich glazes are the result of as many as thirty separate firings. Through Sept. 28. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Tom Otterness—Cast-bronze sculptures in which the artist has mechanized forms from nature; for instance, a flower with petals resembling propellers and a snakelike creature with hinges. Through Oct. 5. (Alexander, in a new location, at 59 Wooster St.)

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Doug Sanderson—Diptychs and triptychs of monochromatic birch panels. Through Sept. 28. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Group Shows—At the **PINDAR,** 127 Greene St.: Constance McMillan's semi-abstract gouaches and Harriet Kline's hand-cast paper works, which contain shredded U.S. currency, are included in an invitational show. Through Sept. 22. (Opens Sundays at 1.) . . . **SOHO 20,** at 469 Broome St.: Paintings and sculptures by ten women artists, including Expressionistic oil paintings by Elaine Galen, minimal wood sculptures by Penny Kaplan, and realist landscape paintings by Shirley Gorelick. Through Saturday, Sept 21. (Opens at noon.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Charles Hewitt—Paintings and wall reliefs, some on aluminum or wood, by an artist who counts "Moby Dick" among his influences, and who dwells on ships and fish and the sea. Through Sept. 29. (M-13, at 440 E. 9th St. Opens Wednesdays through Sundays at 1.)

Judith Linhares / David West—Recent paintings by two young artists who are mining more or less the same Expressionist vein. Through Sept. 29. (Mō David, 436 E. 9th St. Opens Wednesdays through Sundays at 1.)

Georgia Marsh—Gouache and watercolor landscapes of the Hudson River and upstate New York. Through Oct. 5. (Stoler, 13 White St.)

Group Show—Color-linocut prints and their proofs and preparatory drawings, primarily from the thirties, by artists associated with the Grosvenor Art School, in London, who found modern movements such as Cubism and Vorticism well suited to this medium. Through Sept. 26. (Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 7; Saturdays, noon to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Robert Adams—Photographs of suburban America at dusk. Through Oct. 12. (Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Opens at 1.)

Clarence John Laughlin (1905-85)—More than eighty large-format photographs from the forties, fifties, and sixties. Through Sept. 28. (Robert Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Robert Mapplethorpe—Still-lifes, portraits, and compositions characteristic of this artist are presented in different photographic processes—silver prints, lithographs, large color Polaroids, and photogravures, for example. Through Sept. 28. (Gladstone, 152 Wooster St.)

Group Shows—At the **LIGHT,** 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: Photographs and works on paper, mainly completed in the past year by Robert Mapplethorpe, Barbara Kasten, Sheila Metzner, and others. Through Friday, Sept. 20. . . . **MUSEUM OF MODERN ART,** 11 W. 53rd St.: Black-and-white prints by four young Americans. For dates and times, see below under "Museums." . . . **SCHOELKOPF,** 50 W. 57th St.: Photographs of the American West from the last half of the nineteenth century. Through Oct. 2. . . . **WITKIN,** 415 West Broadway: Photographs by seventy-five artists which the gallery's late founder, Lee D. Witkin, considered his favorites. Through Oct. 26. (Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

ART SHOW
PARKING

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Landscapes of the American wilderness and portraits of the Indians who lived there done by Swiss artist Karl Bodmer during an expedition in the early eighteen-thirties. Through Oct. 6. . . . ¶ From the museum's collection of seventy pianos, a kind of genealogical selection—the oldest existing piano, built in 1720 by the instrument's inventor, Cristofori, and about thirty of its progeny; audioguides are available on which visitors can hear them being played. Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ Also from the collection, fifty-five Chinese figure paintings (silk and paper hanging scrolls, hand-scrolls, album leaves, and fans), dating from the eighth century to the seventeenth. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A Kurt Schwitters retrospective that includes a comprehensive selection of collages by one of the first artists to use that form. Through Oct. 1. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** A show of more than forty photographs by Zeke Berman, Antonio Mendoza, Judith Ross, and Michael Spano. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Paintings and works on paper, primarily from the sixties and seventies, by abstractionist Alfred Jensen. Through Nov. 3. . . . ¶ A show of paintings, sculptures, photographs, and installations by nine emerging American artists. Starts Friday, Sept. 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

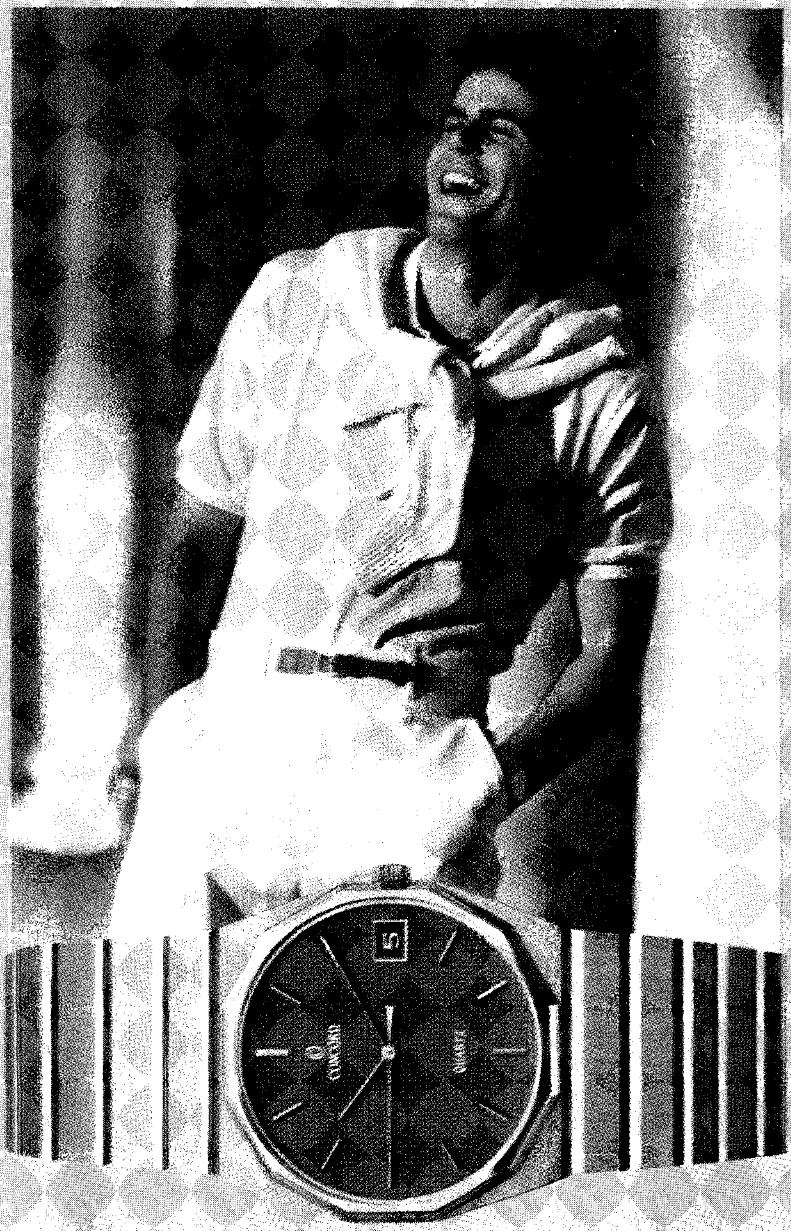
Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A selection of more than ninety of the drawings that have entered the collection over the past few years. Through Sept. 22. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—An exhibition of Japanese folk art. Through Sept. 30. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Wood carvings, beaded wood sculptures, and ceremonial masks still used by Cameroon chiefs are among the objects on view from the West African nation. Through Oct. 15. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An all-purpose exhibit about wine as a creative stimulant: Chalices, decanters, goblets, and vessels of every kind; wallpaper, prints, textiles, and other decorative objects using grapevine patterns. Also, equipment for harvesting and processing—for instance, a large copper-and-brass still from the Cognac region of France. Through Oct. 13. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of drawings and watercolors from the Thaw collection, representing such artists as Rembrandt, Mantegna, van Gogh, Degas, and Klee. Also from that collection, a small selection of bronzes, silversmith works, and oil



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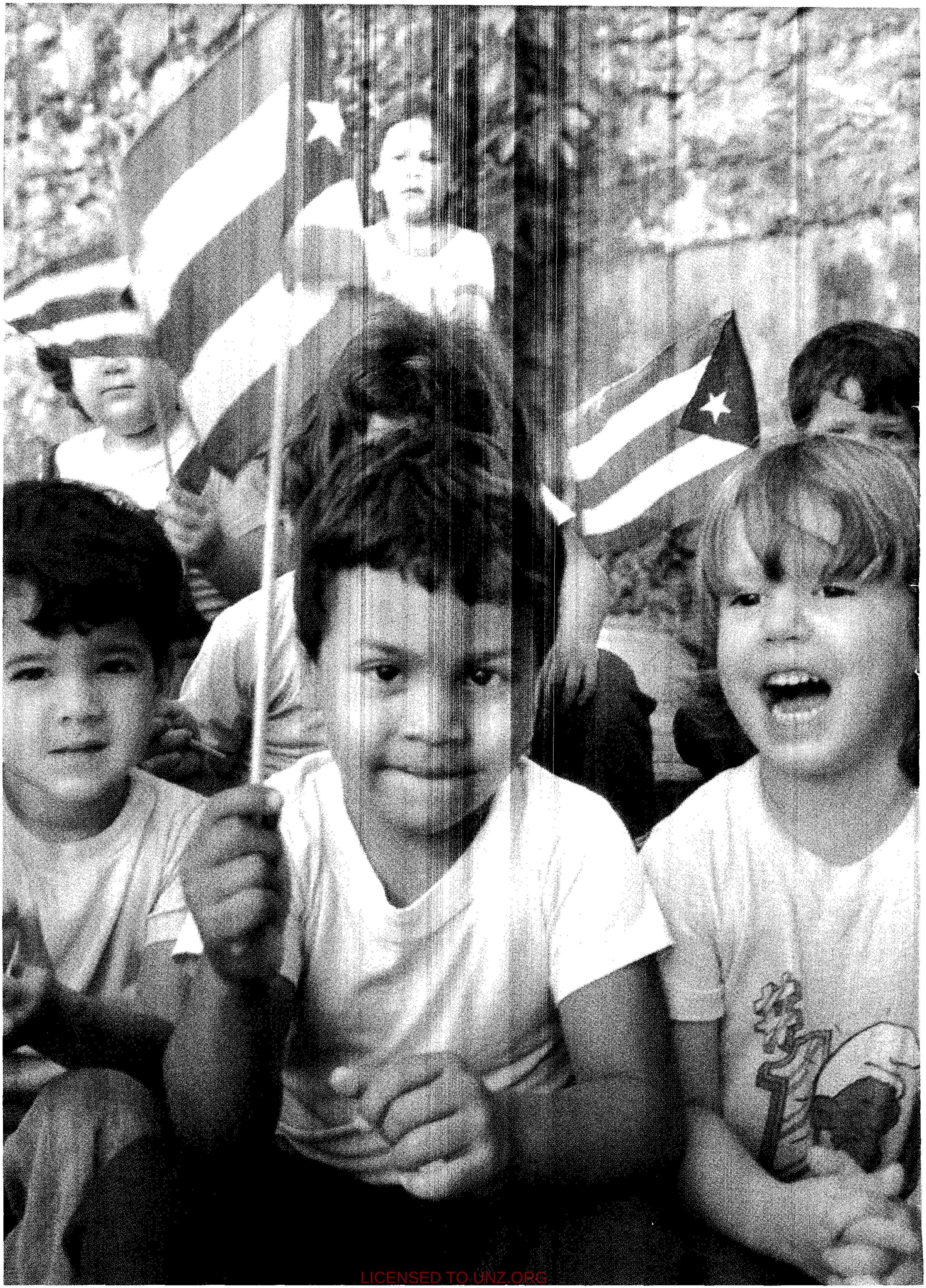

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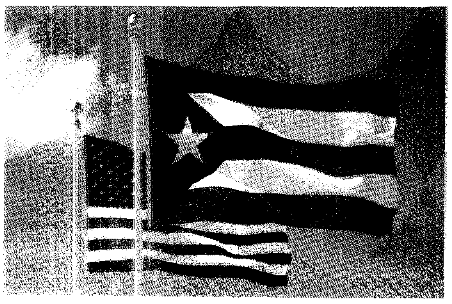

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

paintings. . . . ¶ An exhibit of English illuminated manuscripts from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Both shows through Nov. 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, 125 W. 55th St.—An exhibit of sixty paintings by American naïve artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, among them Ammi Phillips, Erastus Salisbury Field, and Edward Hicks. From the collection given to the National Gallery of Art by Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10:30 to 8, with no admission charge after 5:30; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A broad selection of works by Edward Lear, including wildlife drawings and watercolors, oil landscapes, and early editions of his limerick collection "A Book of Nonsense." Through Nov. 3. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—The bicentennial of Aububon's birth is cause for celebration at the society, which owns and has mounted all four hundred and thirty-three remaining original watercolors for "Birds of America." Through Saturday, Sept. 14. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671—Stephen Holman and Danny Loker (performance), Thursday, Sept. 12, at 8:30.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Man Act (performance), Friday through Sunday, Sept. 13-15, and Thursday through Sunday, Sept. 19-22, at 9.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Avery Fisher Hall is 874-2424, and for Carnegie Hall 247-7800. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

New York City Opera—Wednesday, Sept. 11, at 8: "Manon," with Faith Esham, Richard Leech, William Parker, and William Dansby; conducted by José Serebrier. . . . ¶ Thursday, Sept. 12, at 8: "The Mikado," with Claudette Peterson, Muriel Costa-Greenspon, Robert Tate, and Richard McKee; David Abell. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 13, at 8: A new production of Prokofieff's "The Love for Three Oranges," with Diana Walker, Joyce Castle, Rico Serbo, and Richard McKee; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 14, at 2: "Carmen," with Marianna Christos, Victoria Vergara, Harry Theyard, and Robert McFarland; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 14, at 8: "The Daughter of the Regiment," with Erie Mills, Muriel Costa-Greenspon, Gran Wilson, and Richard McKee; Joseph Rescigno. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 15, at 1: "La Cenerentola," with Leigh Munro, Susanne Marsee, Joyce Castle, Michael Cousins, and William Parker; Alessandro Siciliani. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 8: "Carmen," with Marianna Christos, Victoria Vergara, Harry Theyard, and Robert McFarland; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Sept. 18, at 8: "The Daughter of the Regiment," with Erie Mills, Muriel Costa-Greenspon, Gran Wilson, and Richard McKee; Joseph Rescigno. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 20, at 8: "La Cenerentola," with Leigh Munro, Susanne Marsee, Joyce Castle, Michael Cousins, and William Parker; Alessandro Siciliani. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 21, at 2: "La Traviata," with Marianna Christos, Mark Thomsen, and William Stone; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 21, at 8: "Manon," with Faith Esham, Richard Leech, William Parker, and William Dansby; José Serebrier. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Sunday, Nov. 17.)

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Amato Opera Company—Verdi's "Il Trovatore." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturdays and Friday, Sept. 13, at 7:30, and Sundays at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Zubin Mehta conducting the opening performances of the season, which will run through Saturday, May 17—Wednesday, Sept. 11, at 8: A nonsubscription concert for the benefit of the Philharmonic, with Ravi Shankar, sitar, and drummers from southern India. . . . ¶ Thursday, Sept. 12, at 8; Friday, Sept. 13, at 2; Saturday, Sept. 14, at 8; and Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 7:30: A Copland–L. Subramaniam–Naresh Sohal program, with John Cheek, bass-baritone, and Mr. Subramaniam, violin. . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 19-21, and Monday, Sept. 23, at 8: A Korngold-Schubert program, with Gary Graffman, piano.

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra—At Carnegie Hall, Leonard Bernstein conducting—Saturday, Sept. 21, at 8: A performance of Mahler's Ninth Symphony. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 22, at 3: A Bernstein-Brahms program, with Ransom Wilson, flute.

Korean Symphony Orchestra of New York—Kyung-Hum Shim conducting, with Kun-Woo Paik, piano; Hei-Kyung Hong, soprano; and Kyung-Wook Shin, baritone. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Sunday, Sept. 15, at 8.)

RECITALS

Clive Swansbourne—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, Sept. 12, at 8.)

Shirley Love—Mezzo-soprano, with Yuval Waldman conducting the Cathedral Festival Chamber Orchestra and acting as violin soloist. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Saturday, Sept. 14, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Donald Joyce—Organ, in an all-Bach program. (Church of St. John the Evangelist, First Ave. at 55th St. Sunday, Sept. 15, at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Stephanie Chase—Violin. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Sunday, Sept. 15, at 3:30. No tickets necessary.)

Caroline Stoessinger—Piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 8.)

New School Concerts—Betty Jones, soprano; Joseph Porrello, tenor; Frank Wigglesworth, composer-pianist; and other members of the school faculty. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Thursday, Sept. 19, at 6. No tickets necessary.)

Chelsea Chamber Ensemble—Chamber music. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, Sept. 20, at 8.)

Classic Brass Ensemble—Robert Hall conducting a fifteen-member group, in their first appearance here. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Saturday, Sept. 21, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

SPORTS

Baseball—**mets** at Shea Stadium: Vs. St. Louis, Wednesday, Sept. 11, at 7:35, and Thursday, Sept. 12, at 1:35. . . . ¶ Philadelphia, Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 16-17, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Chicago, Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 18-19, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Pittsburgh, Friday, Sept. 20, at 8:05, and Saturday, Sept. 21, at 1:35. . . . **yankees** at Yankee Stadium: Vs. Toronto, Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 12-14, at 8, and Sunday, Sept. 15, at 2.

Professional Football—Jets vs. Buffalo Bills. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. Sunday, Sept. 15, at 1.)

Racing—At **belmont:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1; through Monday, Oct. 21. The Astarita, the Futurity, and the Marlboro Cup Invitational, Saturday, Sept. 14; the Flower Bowl Handicap, Sunday, Sept. 15; and the Turf Classic Invitational, Saturday, Sept. 21. (Frequent trains leave Penn Station for the track Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays between 10:53 and 12:59, and Saturdays and Sundays between 10:58 and 1:04.) . . . **meadowlands:** Weeknights at 8; through Tuesday, Dec. 31.

Trotting—At Yonkers Raceway: Nightly at 8; through Sunday, Nov. 3.

ET ALIA

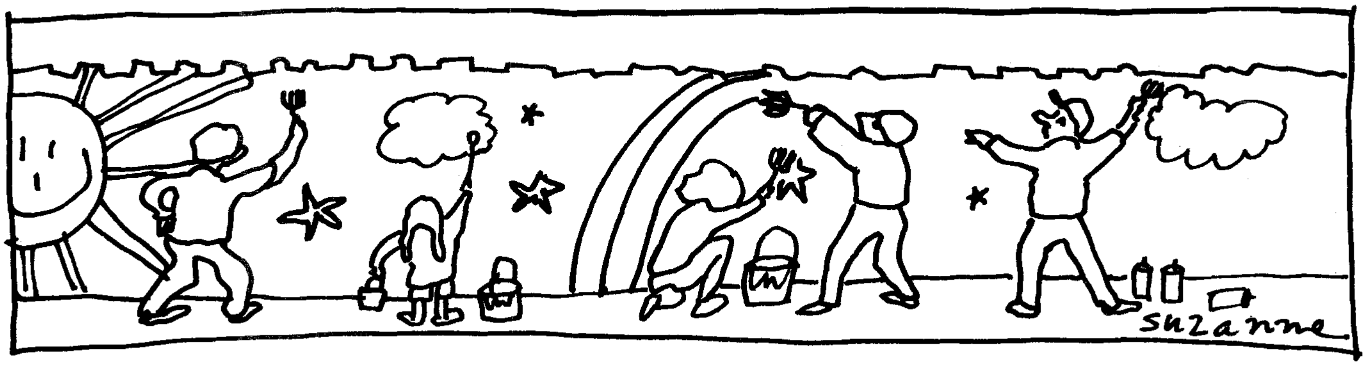
Prose Readings—Edmund White reading from his new novel, "Caracole." (Books & Co., 939 Madison Ave., at 74th St. 737-1450. Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 7:30.). . . ¶ Anthony Burgess reading from his new novel, "Kingdom of the Wicked." (Endicott Booksellers, 450 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. 787-6300. Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 8.)

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Music Festival on the Pier—The Miller beer people's summertime concerts. Thursday and Friday, Sept. 12-13, at 7:30: The Kinks. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 14, at 7:30: A tribute to Folk City, with, among others, Eric Andersen, Arlo Guthrie, Odetta, and Tom Paxton. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. For information about tickets, call 249-8870.)

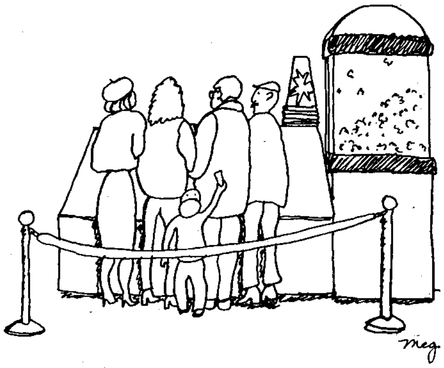
South Street Seaport—Free concerts on the River Stage. Wednesday, Sept. 11, at 8: New York Pops Orchestra and the Harlem Boys Choir. . . . ¶ Thursday, Sept. 12, at 8: Lionel Hampton and his orchestra. . . . ¶ Friday, Sept. 13, at 8: Nelson Riddle orchestra. . . . ¶ Saturday, Sept. 14, at 8: American Symphony Orchestra. . . . ¶ Sunday, Sept. 15, at 6: Dukes of Dixieland. (East River at Fulton St. Wednesday through Saturday, fireworks will accompany the final musical selections of the concerts.)

Washington Square Outdoor Art Exhibit—The semiannual show will be on view Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 14-15, from noon until sundown.



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 23.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
"Vengeance Is Mine" (1979; directed by Shohei Imamura; in Japanese).

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Key Exchange" (Barnet Kellman), with Brooke Adams and Ben Masters.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Sept. 11: "Cocoon" (†).
From Sept. 12: "Silverado" (†).

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
Through Sept. 18: "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (Tim Burton), with Pee-Wee Herman.
From Sept. 19: "Plenty" (Fred Schepisi), with Meryl Streep.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Compromising Positions" (†).
Theatre 2: "Year of the Dragon" (†).
Theatre 3: "Back to the Future" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Sept. 12: "Moving Violations" (Neal Israel).
From Sept. 13: "Key Exchange" (Barnet Kellman), with Brooke Adams and Ben Masters.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through Sept. 12: "Key Exchange" (Barnet Kellman), with Brooke Adams and Ben Masters.
From Sept. 13: "After Hours" (Martin Scorsese), with Griffin Dunne and Rosanna Arquette.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Cocoon" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Sept. 19: "Insignificance" (Nicolas Roeg), with Gary Busey and Tony Curtis.
From Sept. 20: "Joshua Then and Now" (Ted Kotcheff), with James Woods.

Manhattan I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "Summer Rental" (Carl Reiner), with John Candy and Richard Crenna. Sept. 13-19: To be announced. From Sept. 20: "The Emerald Forest" (†).
Theatre 2: "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (Tim Burton), with Pee-Wee Herman.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "The Bride" (Franc Roddam), with Sting and Jennifer Beals. From Sept. 13: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.
Theatre 2: Sept. 11: "Silverado" (†). From Sept. 12: "L'Addition" (Denis Amar; in French), with Richard Berry.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Sept. 19: "The Emerald Forest" (†).
From Sept. 20: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†). From Sept. 20: "Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters" (Paul Schrader), with Ken Ogata.
Theatre 2: Sept. 11: "Bullshot" (Dick Clement), with Ron House. From Sept. 12: "James Joyce's Women."

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "Real Genius" (Martha Coolidge), with Val Kilmer. From Sept. 13: "Sudden Death" (Sig Shore).
Theatre 2: "Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
Through Sept. 18: "American Flyers" (John Badham), with Kevin Costner and David Grant.
From Sept. 19: "Plenty" (Fred Schepisi), with Meryl Streep.

Loews New York Twin I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Back to the Future" (†).
Theatre 2: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1979; Jamie Uys).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Compromising Positions" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Year of the Dragon" (†).
Theatre 2: "Godzilla 1985."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through Sept. 12: "Fright Night" (Tom Holland), with Chris Sarandon.
From Sept. 13: To be announced.

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "The Protector" (James Glickenhaus), with Jackie Chan. From Sept. 13: "Sudden Death" (Sig Shore).
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 12: "Creepers" (Dario Argento), with Jennifer Connelly. From Sept. 13: "When Nature Calls."

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: "Bastille" (1984; directed by Rudolf van den Berg; in Dutch and French).
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 19: "Eureka" (Nicolas Roeg), with Gene Hackman and Theresa Russell. From Sept. 20: "A Matter of Struggle" (Joan Harvey), a documentary.

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "Fright Night" (Tom Holland), with Chris Sarandon. From Sept. 13: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox.
Theatre 2: "Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "Gremlins" (†). From Sept. 13: "When Nature Calls."
Theatre 2: "Prizzi's Honor" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Les Compères" (1984; Francis Véber; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Pierre Richard. From Sept. 20: "Goyokin" (1969; Hideo Gosha; in Japanese).
Theatre 2: "The Shooting Party" (†).
Theatre 3: "Wetherby" (David Hare), with Vanessa Redgrave.
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 19: "The Coca-Cola Kid" (Dusan Makavejev), with Eric Roberts. From Sept. 20: "Insignificance" (Nicholas Roeg), with Gary Busey and Tony Curtis.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Emerald Forest" (†).
Theatre 2: Sept. 11: "The Black Cauldron," an animated film. From Sept. 12: "Cocoon" (†).
Theatre 3: "Silverado" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through Sept. 12: "Sesame Street Presents: Follow That Bird" (Ken Kwapis).
From Sept. 13: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Ghostbusters" (†). No performances on Wednesday, Sept. 11.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
Through Sept. 12: "Le Bal" (1984; Ettore Scola); and "Blood Wedding" (1981; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Antonio Gades.
From Sept. 13: "War and Love" (Moshe Mizrachi).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through Sept. 12: "Animals Are Beautiful People" (Jamie Uys).
From Sept. 13: "Breaker Morant" (1980; Bruce Beresford; an Australian film), with Edward Woodward; and "My Brilliant Career" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Dance with a Stranger" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Prizzi's Honor" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Compromising Positions" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Détective" (Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Nathalie Baye, Claude Brasseur, Johnny Hallyday, and Jean-Pierre Léaud.
Theatre 2: "Dim Sum: A Little Bit of Heart" (Wayne Wang).
Theatre 3: "Wetherby" (David Hare), with Vanessa Redgrave.

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Crossover Dreams" (Leon Ichaso), with Ruben Blades.
Theatre 2: "Prizzi's Honor" (†).

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "La Chèvre" (Francis Véber; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Pierre Richard.
Theatre 2: "My Other Husband" (Georges Lautner; in French), with Miou-Miou, Roger Hanin, and Eddy Mitchell.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Key Exchange" (Barnet Kellman), with Brooke Adams and Ben Masters.
Theatre 2: "Back to the Future" (†).
Theatre 3: "Compromising Positions" (†).
Theatre 4: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox.
Theatre 5: "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (Tim Burton), with Pee-Wee Herman.
Theatre 6: "Year of the Dragon" (†).

Metro Cinema, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
"Amadeus" (†).

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 19: "Year of the Dragon" (†). From Sept. 20: "Street Walkin'."
Theatre 2: "American Ninja" (Sam Firstenberg), with Michael Dudikoff.
Theatre 3: Through Sept. 12: "Fright Night" (Tom Holland), with Chris Sarandon. Sept. 13-19: "Sudden Death" (Sig Shore). From Sept. 20: "Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome" (George Miller and George Ogilvie), with Mel Gibson.
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 12: "Godzilla 1985." From Sept. 13: "When Nature Calls."

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "National Lampoon's European

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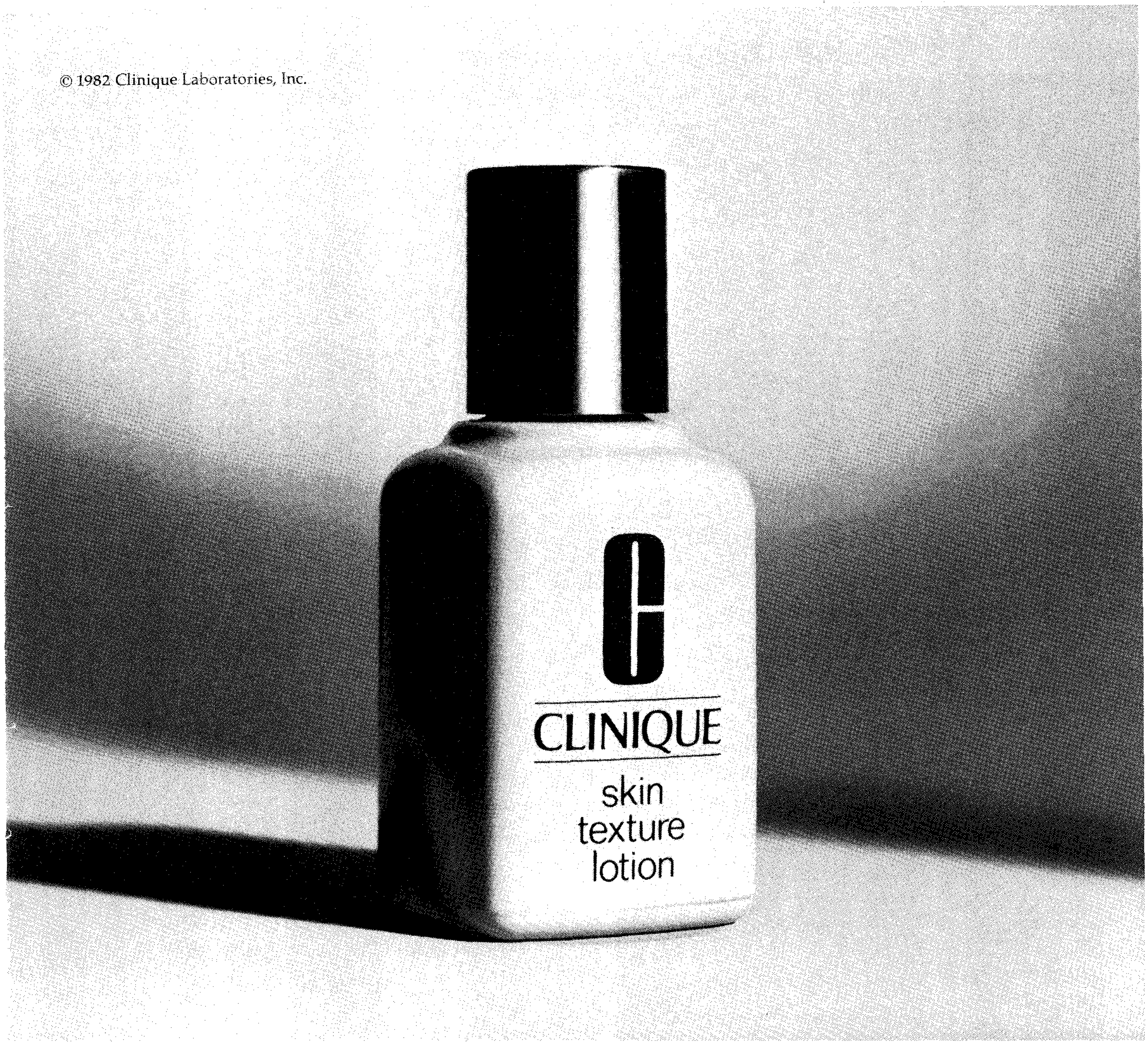


Special Diet.

Some skin problems don't fit the usual solutions. Because the solutions cause more problems.

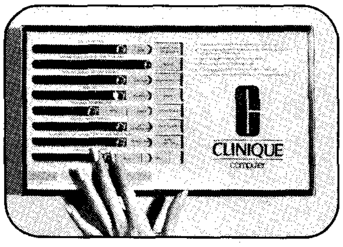
Oily skin, for instance, needs the smoothing of moisturizer. But not the extra oil that starts trouble.

To settle this, Clinique produced just what dermatologists ordered: Skin Texture Lotion. Non-oily, lightweight, water-based, it's the moisturizer for any skin that couldn't use moisturizer before.

Skin Texture Lotion refines the texture of oily skin. Smooths away coarse patches. Softens lines in drier areas. Feels clean. Doesn't clog. Paves the way for makeup.

To find out if it's right for you, consult the Clinique Computer at any of the Clinique counters.

Skin Texture Lotion fills a need. Provides skin with a steady diet of needed moisture. But never overfeeds it with oil.



CLINIQUE

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Vacation" (directed by Amy Heckerling), with Chevy Chase.
Theatre 2: "Cocoon" (†).
Theatre 3: "Gremlins" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 12: "Moving Violations" (Neal Israel). From Sept. 13: "When Nature Calls."
Theatre 5: "Rambo: First Blood Part II" (†).
Theatre 6: "Weird Science" (John Hughes), with Anthony Michael Hall.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"The Black Cauldron," an animated film.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Silverado" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Emerald Forest" (†).
Theatre 4: "Volunteers" (Nicholas Meyer), with Tom Hanks and John Candy.

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
"Year of the Dragon" (†).

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)
Theatre 1: "Back to the Future" (†).
Theatre 2: "Teen Wolf" (Rod Daniel), with Michael J. Fox.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"The Return of the Living Dead" (Dan O'Bannon), with Clu Gulager.

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)
Through Sept. 16: "Summer Rental" (Carl Reiner), with John Candy and Richard Crenna. (No performances on Wednesday, Sept. 11.)
Sept. 17: Theatre closed.
From Sept. 18: "Ruthless Romance."

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Godzilla 1985."
Theatre 2: "Pee-Wee's Big Adventure" (Tim Burton), with Pee-Wee Herman.

R.K.O. Century Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)
Theatre 1: "Creepers" (Dario Argento), with Jennifer Connelly.
Theatre 2: "The Protector" (James Glickenhaus), with Jackie Chan.

U. A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)
Theatre 1: "American Ninja" (Sam Firstenberg), with Michael Dudikoff.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 12: "Fright Night" (Tom Holland), with Chris Sarandon. From Sept. 13: "Sudden Death" (Sig Shore).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Agee Room, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560; on Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"Kerouac, The Movie" (1985; directed by John Antonelli).

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560; on Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Sept. 11: "The Magician" (1958; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ingrid Thulin, Max von Sydow, and Gunnar Björnstrand; and "Illicit Interlude" ("Summer Interlude;" 1951; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Maj-Britt Nilsson.
Sept. 12: "Through a Glass Darkly" (1962; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Harriet Anderssen, Gunnar Björnstrand, Max von Sydow, and Lars Passgård; "Winter Light" (1963; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Gunnar Björnstrand and Ingrid Thulin; and "The Silence" (1964; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ingrid Thulin and Gunnel Lindblom.
Sept. 13-14: "The Seventh Seal" (1956; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Max von Sydow, Gunnar Björnstrand, Bibi Andersson, and Nils Poppe; and "Smiles of a Summer Night" (1955; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Ulla Jacobsson, Eva Dahlbeck, Gunnar Björnstrand, and Jarl Kulle.
Sept. 15: "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" (1979; Joseph Strick); and "Ulysses" (1967; Joseph Strick), with Milo O'Shea, Barbara Jefford, and Maurice Roeves.
Sept. 16: "Tosca's Kiss" (1984; Daniel Schmid; in Italian); and "Allegro Non Troppo" (1977; Bruno Bozzetto; in Italian), a six-episode animated and live-action film.
Sept. 17: "Murmur of the Heart" (1971; Louis Malle; in French), with Léa Massari; and "Forbidden Games" (†).
Sept. 18: "Kanal" (1956) and "Ashes and Diamonds" (1958), both films in Polish, directed by Andrzej Wajda.

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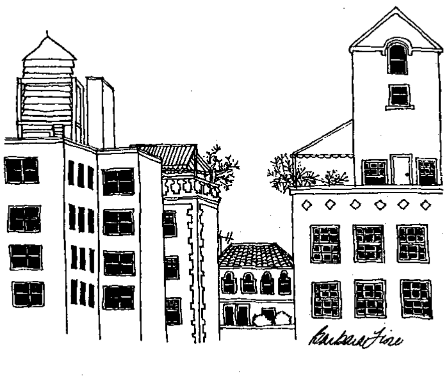
Sept. 19: "Knife in the Water" (1962; Roman Polanski; in Polish); and "Diabolique" (1955; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse.
Sept. 20-21: "Beauty and the Beast" (1946; Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Josette Day, Marcel André, and Michel Auclair; and "Orpheus" (1949; Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Maria Casarès, and François Périer.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
Sept. 11: "The Blue Angel" (1929; Josef von Sternberg; in German), with Marlene Dietrich, Emil Jannings, and Hans Albers; and "Lola Montès" (1955; Max Ophuls; in French), with Martine Carol, Peter Ustinov, and Anton Walbrook.
Sept. 12: "Dersu Uzala" (1978; Akira Kurosawa; in Russian); and "The Lower Depths" (1957; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.
Sept. 13-14: "The Bicycle Thief" (1949; Vittorio De Sica; in Italian); and "Los Olvidados" ("The Young and the Damned;" 1950; Luis Buñuel; in Spanish).
Sept. 15: "The Tin Drum" (1980; Volker Schlöndorff; in German), with David Bennent.
Sept. 16: "Love on the Run" (1979; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud, Marie-France Pisier, and Claude Jade; and "Mon Oncle d'Amérique" (1980; Alain Resnais; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Nicole Garcia, and Roger-Pierre.
Sept. 17: "Accattone!" (†); and "The Gospel According to St. Matthew" (1966; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian), with a cast of nonprofessionals.
Sept. 18: "Loves of a Blonde" (1965; Miloš Forman; a Czech film); and "Closely Watched Trains" (†).
Sept. 19: "Kwaidan" (1965; Masaki Kobayashi; in Japanese).
Sept. 20-21: "Walkabout" (1971; Nicolas Roeg; an Australian film); and "Gallipoli" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Sept. 12: "Tootsie" (1982; Sydney Pollack), with Dustin Hoffman, Jessica Lange, Teri Garr, and Charles Durning; and "Victor/Victoria" (1982; Blake Edwards), with Julie Andrews, James Garner, Robert Preston, Lesley Ann Warren, and Alex Karras.
Sept. 13-14: "Gallipoli" (†); and "The Year of Living Dangerously" (1983; Peter Weir), with Mel Gibson, Sigourney Weaver, and Linda Hunt.
Sept. 15: "Reds" (†).
Sept. 16-17: "Mean Streets" (1973; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro and Harvey Keitel; and "Taxi Driver" (†).
Sept. 18-19: "Touch of Evil" (1958; Orson Welles), with Welles, Charlton Heston, and Janet Leigh; and "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948; Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles.
Sept. 20-21: "The King of Comedy" (1983; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro and Jerry Lewis; and "Stardust Memories" (1980; Woody Allen), with Allen, Charlotte Rampling, Jessica Harper, Marie-Christine Barrault, and Tony Roberts.



8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Sept. 12: "Godzilla 1985."
From Sept. 13: "Sudden Death" (Sig Shore).

Hollywood Twin Cinema 1, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)
Sept. 11: "Les Misérables" (1935; Richard Boleslavsky), with Charles Laughton and Fredric March; and "The Lion in Winter" (1968; Anthony Harvey), with Peter O'Toole and Katharine Hepburn.
Sept. 12-14: "Harold and Maude" (1971; Hal Ashby), with Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort; and "King of Hearts" (1967; Philippe de Broca; in French and English), with Alan Bates and Geneviève Bujold.
Sept. 15-16: "West Side Story" (1961; Robert Wise), with Natalie Wood, Richard Beymer, Russ Tamblyn, Rita Moreno, and George Chakiris; and "Splendor in the Grass" (1961; Elia Kazan), with Natalie Wood, Warren Beatty, and Pat Hingle.
Sept. 17-18: "Butterfield 8" (1960; Daniel Mann), with Elizabeth Taylor, Laurence Harvey, Eddie Fisher, and Dina Merrill; and "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966; Mike Nichols), with Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis.
Sept. 19-21: "Mask" (1985; Peter Bogdanovich), with Cher, Eric Stoltz, and Sam Elliott; and "The Elephant Man" (†).

Hollywood Twin Cinema 2, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)
Through Sept. 12: "Police Academy" (1984; Hugh Wilson), with Steve Guttenberg and Kim Cattrall; and "Police Academy 2: Their First Assignment" (1985; Jerry Paris), with Steve Guttenberg.
Sept. 13-14: "The Long Good Friday" (1982; John Mackenzie), with Bob Hoskins and Helen Mirren; and "The King of Comedy" (1983; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro and Jerry Lewis.
Sept. 15: "The Thing" (1982; John Carpenter), with Kurt Russell; and "Dawn of the Dead" (†).
Sept. 16-17: "Come Back to the 5 & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean" (1982; Robert Altman), with Sandy Dennis, Cher, and Karen Black; and "Streamers" (1983; Robert Altman), with Matthew Modine.
Sept. 18-19: "Desperately Seeking Susan" (1985; Susan Seidelman), with Rosanna Arquette and Madonna; and "Flashdance" (†).
Sept. 20-21: "This Is Spinal Tap" (1984; Rob Reiner), with Reiner and Christopher Guest; and "Purple Rain" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through Sept. 12: "In a Lonely Place" (1950; Nicholas Ray), with Humphrey Bogart and Gloria Grahame; "Love Affair" (1932; Thornton Freeland), with Humphrey Bogart and Dorothy MacKaill; and "Dead Reckoning" (1947; John Cromwell), with Humphrey Bogart and Lizabeth Scott.
Sept. 13-14: "The Two Mrs. Carrolls" (1947; Peter Godfrey), with Barbara Stanwyck, Humphrey Bogart, and Alexis Smith; and "Across the Pacific" (1942; John Huston), with Humphrey Bogart, Mary Astor, and Sydney Greenstreet.
Sept. 15-16: "The Roaring Twenties" (†) and "Marked Woman" (†).
Sept. 17-18: "Sahara" (†); and "Passage to Marseille" (1944; Michael Curtiz), with Humphrey Bogart, Michèle Morgan, and Sydney Greenstreet.
Sept. 19-21: "The Barefoot Contessa" (†) and "Beat the Devil" (†).

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)
Sept. 11: "Distant Thunder" (1973) and "The Adversary" (1971), both films in Bengali, directed by Satyajit Ray.
Sept. 12: "Becket" (1964; Peter Glenville), with Richard Burton and Peter O'Toole.
Sept. 13-14: "Mad Max" (1980; George Miller and Mel Gibson; an Australian film), with Gibson; and "Razorback" (1984).
Sept. 15: "Veronika Voss" (1982; Rainer

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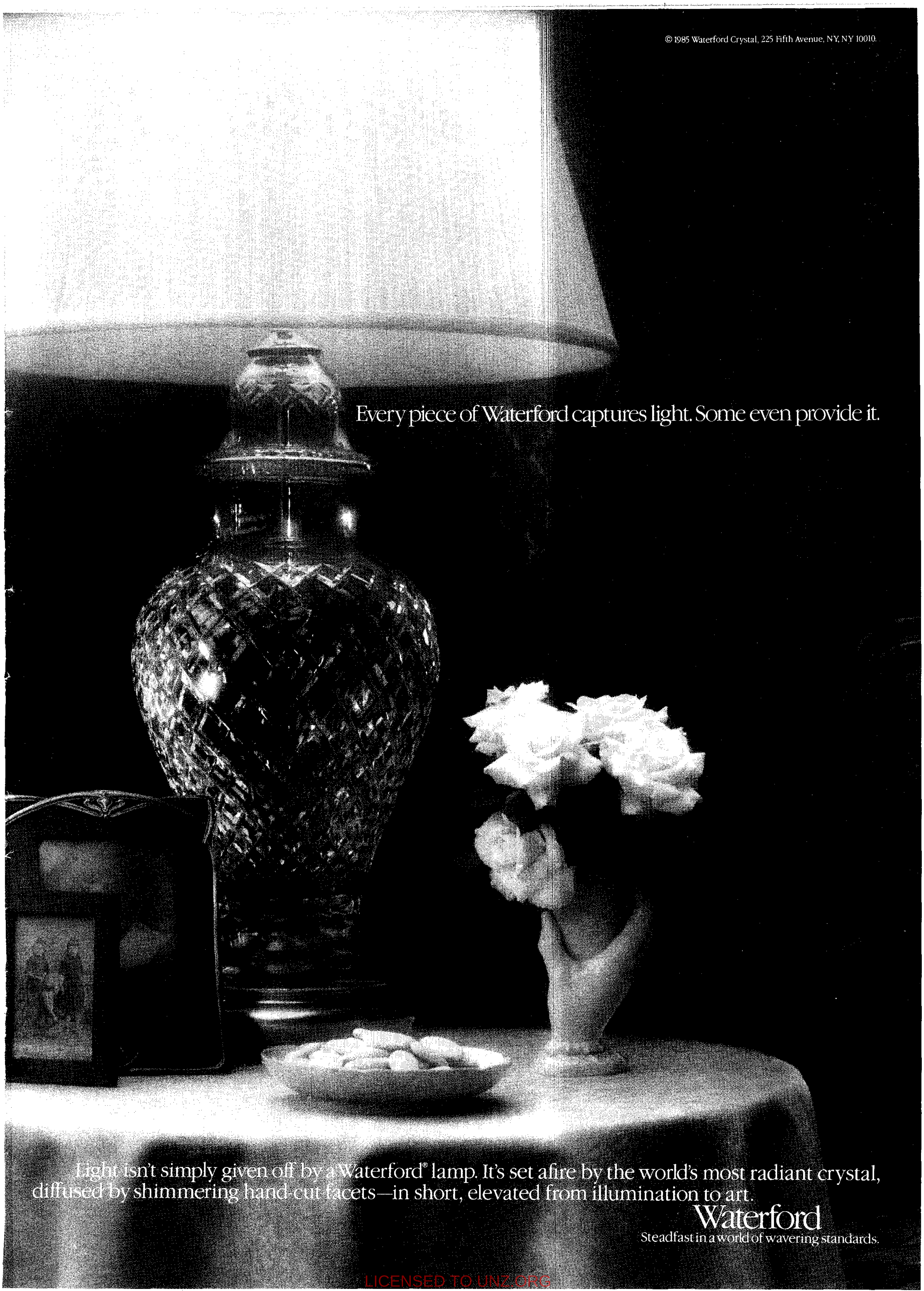
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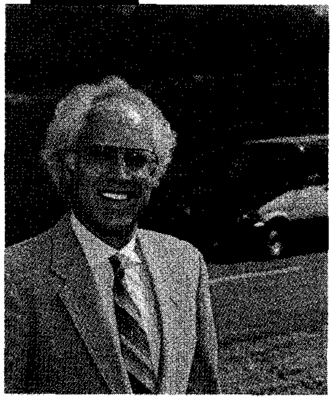

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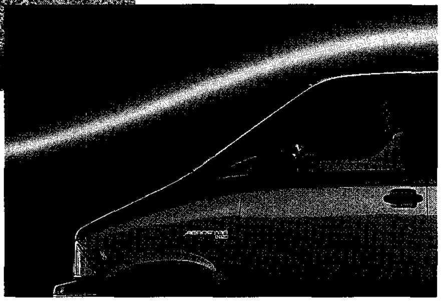
Larry Socha
Manager,
Exterior and Aerodynamics,
Design Engineering

*Complete air flow management helps make Aerostar's fuel economy ratings better than those of many 1985 compact sedans.**



Ford Aerostar is one of the newest examples of the commitment to quality at Ford Motor Company; demonstrating leadership in applying aerodynamic principles to automotive design.

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23 EPA estimated city mileage (wagon).

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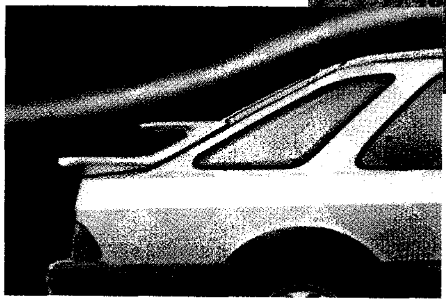
GINEERING

Merkur's biplane rear spoilers not only contribute to solid road feel but also help reduce the air turbulence behind the vehicle for greater aerodynamic efficiency.



Merkur uses a small scoop to take only as much air as the engine needs for cooling and let the rest flow over the car smoothly to exert "down force" on Merkur's biplane rear spoilers. Result: The feel of solid, in-touch-with-the-road, quality.

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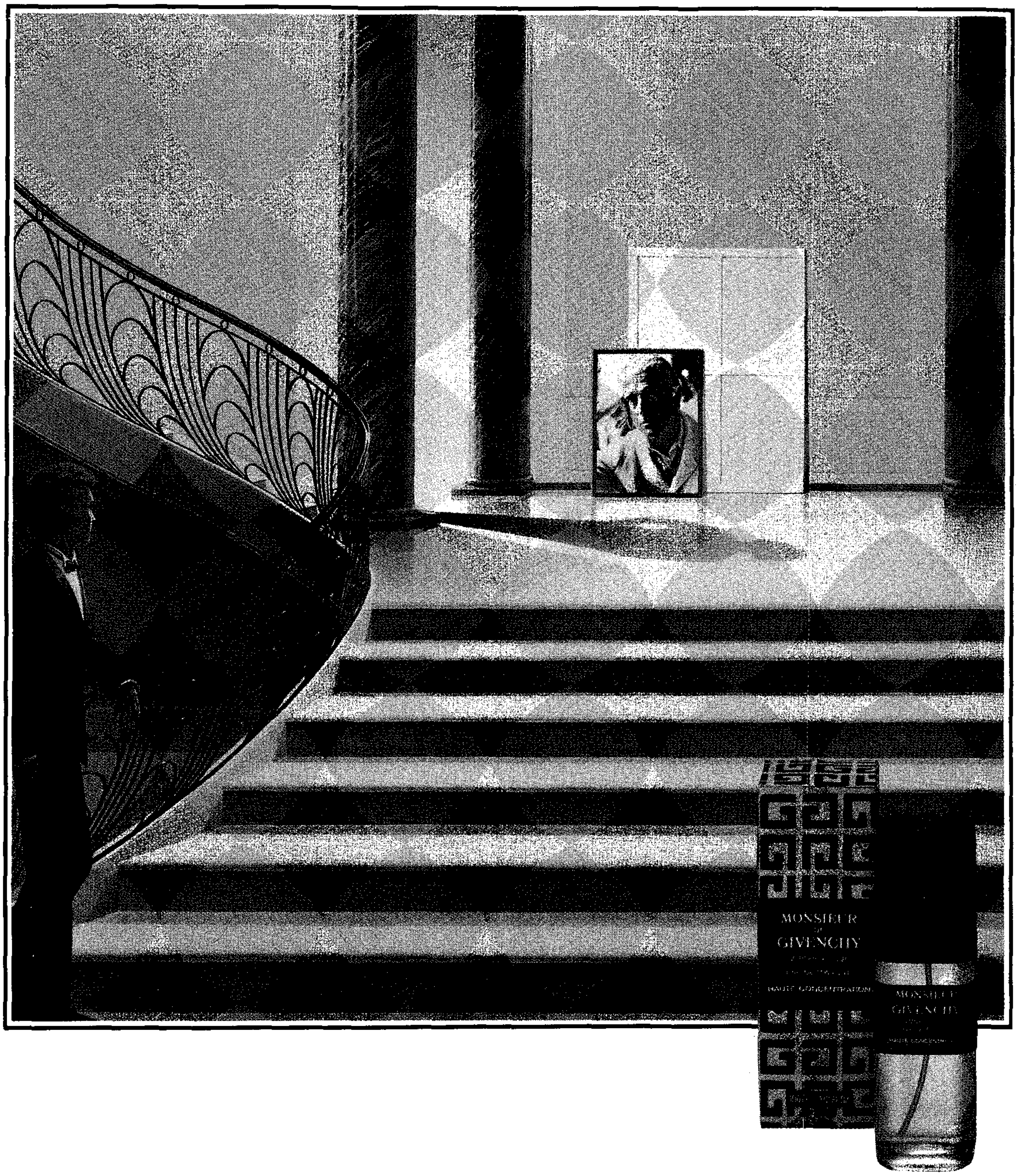
MONSIEUR
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HAUTE CONCENTRATION
MONSIEUR
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GIVENCHY
PARIS
PARFUMS

SAKS FIFTH AVENUE

Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Rosel Zech; and "Lola" (1982; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German).

Sept. 16: "Alice Sweet Alice" (1977); and "Night Tide" (1964; Curtis Harrington), with Dennis Hopper.

Sept. 17: "Lianna" (1983; John Sayles); and "The Children's Hour" (†).

Sept. 18: "Tim" (1981; Michael Pate; an Australian film), with Piper Laurie and Mel Gibson; and "Winter of Our Dreams" (1982; John Duigan; an Australian film), with Bryan Brown and Judy Davis.

Sept. 19: "Viridiana" (1961; Luis Buñuel; in Spanish), with Francisco Rabal and Silvia Pinal; and "El" (†).

Sept. 20-21: "Being There" (1979; Hal Ashby), with Peter Sellers, Shirley MacLaine, Melvyn Douglas, and Jack Warden; and "Reuben, Reuben" (1983; Robert Ellis Miller), with Tom Conti.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Sept. 11: "Brief Encounter" (1946; David Lean), with Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard; and "Hobson's Choice" (1953; David Lean), with Charles Laughton and John Mills.

Sept. 12: "Humoresque" (1946; Jean Negulesco), with Joan Crawford and John Garfield; and "Possessed" (1947; Curtis Bernhardt), with Joan Crawford and Van Heflin.

Sept. 13-14: "Jamaica Inn" (1939; Alfred Hitchcock), with Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Hara, and Emlyn Williams; and "Shadow of a Doubt" (1942; Alfred Hitchcock), with Teresa Wright, Joseph Cotten, Patricia Collinge, Hume Cronyn, and Henry Travers.

Sept. 15: "Little Women" (1933; George Cukor), with Katharine Hepburn, Joan Bennett, Edna May Oliver, Frances Dee, and Spring Byington; and "Pride and Prejudice" (1940; Robert Z. Leonard), with Greer Garson, Laurence Olivier, and Edna May Oliver.

Sept. 16: "A Man and a Woman" (1966; Claude Lelouch; in French), with Anouk Aimée and Jean-Louis Trintignant; and "Live for Life" (†).

Sept. 17: "Queen Bee" (1955; Ranald MacDougall), with Joan Crawford and Barry Sullivan; and "Strait-Jacket" (1964; William Castle), with Joan Crawford.

Sept. 18: "Sunny" (1930; William A. Seiter), with Marilyn Miller; and "Folies-Bergère" (†).

Sept. 19: "My Favorite Wife" (†); and "Unfaithfully Yours" (1948; Preston Sturges), with Rex Harrison and Linda Darnell.

Sept. 20-21: "The Trial" (1963; Orson Welles), with Anthony Perkins; and "The Third Man" (1950; Carol Reed), with Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Trevor Howard.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre I: Sept. 12 at 2:30 and 6: A program of films by Alice Guy-Blaché. . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 2:30 and 6: A program of cartoons by Friz Freleng. . . . ¶ Sept. 14 at 2 and 5: A program of cartoons featuring the voice of Mel Blanc. . . . ¶ Sept. 15 at 2 and 5: A program of cartoons by Chuck Jones. . . . ¶ Sept. 16 at 2:30: "The Fallen Idol" (1948; Carol Reed), with Ralph Richardson, Michèle Morgan, Bobby Henrey, and Jack Hawkins. . . . ¶ Sept. 16 at 6: "Brighton Rock" (1947; John Boulting), with Richard Attenborough and Hermione Baddeley. . . . ¶ Sept. 17 at 2:30: "The Farmer's Wife" (1928; Alfred Hitchcock; a silent film), with Jameson Thomas. . . . ¶ Sept. 17 at 6: "Loyalties" (1933; Basil Dean), with Basil Rathbone, Heather Thatcher, and Miles Mander. . . . ¶ Sept. 19 at 2:30: "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (1976; Miloš Forman), with Jack Nicholson and Louise Fletcher. . . . ¶ Sept. 19 at 6: "Female Trouble" (1975; John Waters), with Divine. . . . ¶ Sept. 20 at 2:30: "The Importance of Being Earnest" (1952; Anthony Asquith), with Michael Redgrave. . . . ¶ Sept. 20 at 6: "Richard III" (1955; Laurence Olivier), with Olivier, John Gielgud, Claire Bloom, and Ralph Richardson. . . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 12:30: A program of early cartoons. . . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 2: "Richard III." . . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 5: "Hobson's Choice" (1954; David Lean), with Charles Laughton, John Mills, and Brenda de Banzie.

Theatre 2: Sept. 12 at 3: "Under Fire" (1983; Roger Spottiswoode), with Nick Nolte, Gene Hackman, Jean-Louis Trintignant, and Joanna Cassidy. . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 6:30: "Xala" (1975; Ousmane Sembène; in Wolof and French, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Sept. 14 at 2:30: "La Crabe Tambour" (1977; Pierre Schoendoerffer; in French, with English subtitles), with Jacques Perrin and Jean Rochefort. . . . ¶ Sept. 14 at 5:30: "Under Fire." . . . ¶ Sept. 15 at 2:30: "Angi Vera" (1979; Pal Gábor; in Hungarian, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Sept. 15 at 5:30: "Without Anesthesia" (1979; Andrzej Wajda; in Polish, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Sept. 16 at 3: "Pixote" (1981; Hector Babenco; in Portuguese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Sept. 16 at 6:30: "Xala." . . . ¶ Sept. 17 at 3: "Female Trouble" (1975; John Waters), with Divine. . . . ¶ Sept. 17 at 6:30: "Angi Vera." . . . ¶ Sept. 19 at 3 and 6:30: Two parts of "How Yukong Moved the Mountains" (1972-75; Joris Ivens and Marceline Loridan; with English voice-over)—"Behind the Scenes of the Peking Circus" and "The Drugstore." . . . ¶ Sept. 20 at 3: "Without Anesthesia." . . . ¶ Sept. 20 at 6:30: "La Crabe Tambour." . . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 2:30: "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (1976; Miloš Forman), with Jack Nicholson and Louise Fletcher. . . . ¶ Sept. 21 at 5:30: "Casual Relations" (1973; Mark Rappaport).

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Accattone! (1961)—Pier Paolo Pasolini's film about a Catholic boy at the bottom of the heap. The characters and the story are simple and anti-bourgeois by nature; Pasolini's coldly humorless theories and *haut bourgeois* intellect sabotage practically everything that he hopes to do emotionally in the picture. In Italian. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 17.)

Amadeus (1984)—The lofty playwright Peter Shaffer has the minor composer Salieri (F. Murray Abraham) declaring war on Heaven for gypping him, and determined to ruin the incomparable Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Tom Hulce) because God's voice is speaking through him. The director, Miloš Forman, trudges through the movie as if every step were a major contribution to art, and he keeps the audience hooked. Some redeeming qualities: Mozart's music, Twyla Tharp's staging of the dances and opera excerpts, and Abraham's eager, slimy Salieri. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/29/84.) (Metro Cinema.)

Back to the Future—Directed by Robert Zemeckis, this piece of Pop Art Americana is a clever, generally engaging screwball comedy. Christopher Lloyd is the small-town crackpot inventor who builds a time machine, and Michael J. Fox is Marty, the seventeen-year-old high-school boy who is hurtled back thirty years to 1955, where his parents are seventeen-year-olds at the same school. The movie has the structure of a comedy classic, but it doesn't have the rambunctiousness or the maniacal edge; the thinking is cramped and conventional. With Lea Thompson and Crispin Glover. (7/29/85) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews State.)

The Barefoot Contessa (1954)—Writer-director Joseph L. Mankiewicz tries to tell all about Hollywood—where the men aren't men and the women are magnificent, frustrated animals. Flamenco dancer Ava Gardner is discovered in the slums of Madrid by a vicious millionaire producer (Warren Stevens), a gutless, sycophantic press agent (Edmond O'Brien), and an alcoholic, broken-down director (Humphrey Bogart). She becomes a glamorous star but only feels at home with her feet in the dirt (symbolized by a guitar player, a chauffeur, and a gypsy dancer). The movie is so ornate and so garrulous about telling the dirty truth that it's a camp classic. With Rossano Brazzi, Marius Goring, Valentina Cortesa, and Elizabeth Sellars. (Regency; Sept. 19-21.)

Beat the Devil (1954)—The plot of the picture was unknown to the cast, but presumably known to its director, John Huston, and his co-writer, Truman Capote; however, Capote later remarked that he had "a suspicion that John wasn't too clear about it." Commercially speaking, the movie courted—and achieved—disaster. It kidded itself, yet it succeeded in some original (and perhaps dangerously marginal) way by finding a style of its own. Humphrey Bogart and his wife, Gina Lollobrigida, are on a ship bound for British East Africa; their travelling companions are a gang of uranium swindlers. Then there's a shipwreck. This straight-faced parody of the international thriller killed off the whole genre. With Robert Morley, Peter Lorre, and Jennifer Jones. (Regency; Sept. 19-21.)

The Children's Hour (1962)—William Wyler, who in 1936 had made a bowdlerized version of the Lillian Hellman play "The Children's Hour," returned to the material in 1962 and remade it, with the charge of sexual deviation restored—that is, with the two schoolmistress heroines (Audrey Hepburn and Shirley MacLaine) accused of lesbianism by one of their pupils. The result is too self-conscious, though; the atmosphere is heavy and lugubrious. With Miriam Hopkins, Fay Bainter, and James Garner. (Thalia; Sept. 17.)

Closely Watched Trains (1966)—A wryly tender Czech film about how a shy, scared young man, who comes from a long line of patsies and fools, succeeds in bed but loses his life. This first film directed by Jiří Menzel is set during the Second World War, and most of it takes place at a village railway station; it's fairly simple—the modest sort of film that shows human concern and decency but isn't very stimulating. But it's also a sophisticated, elliptical folktale, with quirky moments of small-town passion. In Czech. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 18.)

Cocoon—A science-fantasy sitcom, in which the old people from a retirement community go off to the planet Antares, a Shangri-La in space. If audiences enjoy the movie, it's largely because of the elderly actors and the affection that the young director, Ron Howard, shows for them. But Howard keeps trying to extract tender emotions from scenes that could get by only as slapstick, and from scenes that can't get by as anything. The plot is less than ingenious, and things get pretty cloying. With Wilford Brimley, Don Ameche, Hume Cronyn, Jack Gilford, Maureen Stapleton, Gwen Verdon, Jessica Tandy, Herta Ware, Steve Guttenberg, Barret Oliver, and Brian Dennehy. (7/15/85) (Gotham Cinema, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; Sept. 11. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex; starting Sept. 12.)

Compromising Positions—Susan Isaacs wrote the screenplay, adapted from her likably crafted 1978 detective novel, set on Long Island, and her fresh dialogue rhythms give you a lift. Directed by Frank Perry, the movie provides a batch of actresses with a chance to show some comic verve. Susan Sarandon does some inspired double takes—just letting her beautiful dark eyes pop. She's the heroine, whose unquenchable curiosity saves her from the doldrums of affluence in the suburbs with a lawyer husband; when her smiley-eyed, lecherous dentist (Joe Mantegna) is murdered in his snazzy office, she can't resist poking into the case, because it reveals so much about what has been going on around her which she has been unaware of. (Her spontaneous, impetuous fixation on the murder is charmingly irrational; you can feel that something is bubbling up from way down inside her.) Judith Ivey is in top form as the heroine's best friend and opposite number—a frisky cynic who seems to have been wised up from birth. And Deborah Rush is startlingly poignant as a tarty, uneducated blonde, with scars on her tummy and frightened eyes. The cast includes Raul Julia as the police investigator, Anne De Salvo as the widow, Mary Beth Hurt, Josh Mostel, Joan Allen, and Edward Herrmann, who, as the heroine's husband, starts out as a lively, friendly fellow, and then is turned into her oppressor. That's the plot development that pulls this pleasant, light entertainment down to banality in its second half. Cinematography (with an inexplicable emphasis on ceilings) by Barry Sonnenfeld. (9/9/85) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Loews Paramount, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

Dance with a Stranger—Set in London in 1954 and 1955, and featuring Miranda Richardson as Ruth Ellis, the demi-prostitute who put a few slugs in her weakling young lover (played by Rupert Everett), and was the last woman in England to be sent to the gallows, this English film might be described as kitchen-sink *film noir.* The director, Mike Newell, doesn't give you a minute's relief. The picture is all style—style used to show us the shabbiness of the characters' lives and how they're all trapped, doing what's inevitable. With Ian Holm. (8/26/85) (Paris.)

Dawn of the Dead (1979)—The recently deceased rise from their graves; they're insatiably hungry, and they cannibalize the living, chomping on anyone they can grab. The chomped, in turn, become ghouls. This idea had already served the director, George A. Romero, as the subject of his 1968 "Night of the Living Dead," a cheaply made, truly frightening movie, but this time he did it in shining, comic-book color, and on an epic scale. You're supposed to need a strong stomach to sit through this one, but it's so stupefyingly obvious and repetitive that it's just a gross-out. With Scott Reiniger, Ken Foree, Gaylen Ross, and David Emge. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; Sept. 15.)

El (1952; literally, "He," but in this country it has sometimes been called "This Strange Passion")—Luis Buñuel made this mocking study of irrational love and jealousy—a film with suggestions of Freud and the Marquis de Sade. Francisco (Arturo de Cordova), a wealthy Catholic, marries Gloria (Delia Garcés), and the symptoms begin on their honeymoon; imagining that her former fiancé is in the next room spying on them, he thrusts a knitting needle through the keyhole. As the symptoms mount in an absurd but frightening crescendo, Buñuel makes his own thrusts at the Church, and by carrying the Spanish male's obsession with female chastity to paranoia he exposes the insanity that's inherent in it. In Spanish. (Thalia; Sept. 19.)

The Elephant Man (1980)—A very pleasurable surprise. The by now well-known story of John Merrick, the grievously eminent Victorian who is sometimes said to have been the ugliest man who ever lived, is told by the young director David Lynch with such grace and imagination that it becomes a tale of a terrible enchantment. Inside Merrick's misshapen body is an astonishingly sweet-souled gentleman of his era. John Hurt plays Merrick, and Anthony Hopkins is Frederick Treves, the doctor who rescues him from the world of sideshows. With John Gielgud, Wendy Hiller, Hannah Gordon, Anne Bancroft, and Freddie Jones. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; Sept. 19-21.)

The Emerald Forest—John Boorman sets his story in Brazil, where the son of an American engineer (played by Powers Boothe) is abducted by an Amazon-rain-forest tribe. For ten years, the father searches for the boy in whatever time he can take off from his job of building a giant dam. When, at last, he locates his seventeen-year-old son (played by the director's son, Charley Boorman), he realizes that the boy's consciousness surpasses his own and that the boy's life is superior to anything civilization has to offer. And soon the father realizes that the dam is destroying the boy's tribe. The faults that have plagued Boorman's films—his lack of interest in character, his rather lordly failure to dramatize the issues that excite him the most, his wacko ear for dialogue—really pile up this time, and he doesn't seem able to get any kind of seductive flow going. With Rui Polonah, Meg Foster, Dira Paes, and Eduardo Conde. (8/12/85) (23rd St. West Triplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; through Sept. 19. . . . ¶ Manhattan; starting Sept. 20.)

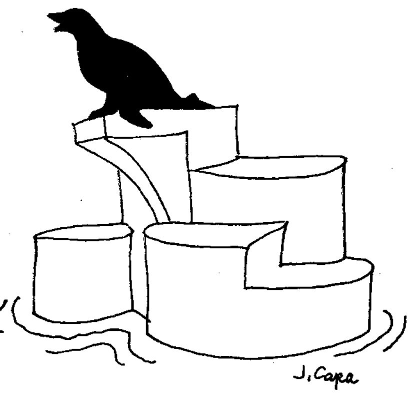
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21

Flashdance (1983)—A lulling, narcotizing musical, it sells the kind of romantic story that was laughed off the screen thirty years ago and then made a comeback with "Rocky" I, II, and III. The eighteen-year-old working-class Catholic heroine (dewy-eyed face and darling smile by Jennifer Beals, dancing by Marine Jahan) is a welder by day and a dancer in a bar at night. The music throughout is synthesizer pop; basically the movie is a series of rock videos. The dancing doesn't go the way a body goes; the dancing goes the way an eggbeater goes. Directed by Adrian Lyne. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; Sept. 18-19.)

Folies-Bergère (1935)—Maurice Chevalier, in a dual role as a famous sporting baron who's a devil with the ladies and a Folies-Bergère entertainer whose most popular number is an impersonation of the baron. Inevitably, the baron hires the entertainer to take his place, and the entertainer winds up in the boudoir of the baroness (Merle Oberon). The baroness flirts with the false baron, allowing him to think she thinks he's the real baron, and then she succumbs to the real baron, allowing him to think she believes him to be the false baron. This elaborate coquetry may sound tedious but it's surprisingly effective as a framework for slightly risqué comedy. With Ann Sothern and Eric Blore. Roy Del Ruth directed. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 18.)

Forbidden Games (1952)—René Clément's beautiful, lacerating film on the themes of innocence, Christianity, war, and death. On a crowded highway outside Paris in 1940, a delicate five-year-old girl wanders away from the strafed bodies of her parents, clutching her dead puppy in her arms. She and an eleven-year-old peasant boy become playmates; their game—their passion—is to collect dead animals for their private cemetery, and for this game they steal crosses from churches and graveyards. Clément's method of presentation—a series of harsh contrasts between the intuitive, lyric understanding of the two children and the ludicrous comedy of the quarrelsome, ignorant peasant adults—is perhaps unfair to the adults. But it's an act of kindness to the audience: without the element of gross caricature we might dissolve in tears. With Brigitte Fossey and Georges Poujouly. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Sept. 17.)

Gallipoli (1981)—An exemplary academic film about the waste of war—two young Australian runners, played by (dark-haired) Mel Gibson and (blond) Mark Lee, are slaughtered. (They and other Australians are sacrificed in an ill-conceived First World War maneuver designed to protect the British.) It's an "artistic" film, full of familiar pathos and irony—a tragic buddy-buddy movie directed by Peter Weir. His wide-screen staging is very elegant; his weakness is in his habit of stereotyping villains (in this case they're mostly the British). Gibson gives a fresh and impressive performance, but Lee does a very ordinary acting job and his character is much too gallant and good and brave. With Bill Kerr. (Cinema Village; Sept. 13-14. . . . ¶ Carnegie Hall Cinema; Sept. 20-21.)



Ghostbusters (1984)—A scare comedy, with Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, and Harold Ramis as parapsychologists who try to save New York City from an influx of spooks. Murray is the film's comic mechanism: the more supernatural the situation, the more jaded his reaction. But nobody else has much in the way of material, and since there's almost no give-and-take among the three men, Murray's lines fall on dead air. Playing opposite Murray, Sigourney Weaver is a living zinger; when she stands talking to Murray, she's eye to eye with him and she looks vivid and indestructible. The cast includes Annie Potts, Rick Moranis, Ernie Hudson, William Atherton, and David Margulies. Directed by Ivan Reitman. (6/25/84) (Ziegfeld. No performances on Wednesday, Sept. 11.)

Gremlins (1984)—The director, Joe Dante, has the sensibility of a freaked-out greeting-card poet. This whimsical pop shocker is set in a sleepy small town at Christmastime. The hero Billy (Zach Galligan), a young bank teller, is given a mogwai—a tiny creature who nests in a box and makes gentle cooing sounds; when the instructions that Billy is given for its care are inadvertently disobeyed, the mogwai multiplies, and its progeny turn into greedy, demonic little gargoyles. The movie never comes together, but Dante is a genuine eccentric talent with a flair for malice. With Frances Lee McCain, Polly Holliday, Phoebe Cates, and Hoyt Axton. The critters were designed by Chris Walas. (6/25/84) (Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin; through Sept. 12.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—Set in a nameless South American country, Hector Babenco's film is about a homosexual window dresser, Molina (William Hurt), and a revolutionary, Valentín (Raul Julia), who share a prison cell. Molina tries to comfort Valentín and help him forget his pain and misery by telling him the stories of old movies. Hurt is just about the only thing to look at; he's very likable in the scenes where Molina reveals his tenderness and warmth and humor. But it's a slack piece of moviemaking, and as sentimental as the forties screen romances that Molina is infatuated with. This Brazilian production, made in English, was shot in São Paulo. (8/26/85) (Cinema I; through Sept. 19. . . . ¶ D. W. Griffith; starting Sept. 20.)

Live for Life (1967)—Directed by Claude Lelouch, with Yves Montand as a television reporter who is about to ruin his marriage by having an affair with Candice Bergen but finally goes back to Annie Girardot. Quite good pulp. In French. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 16.)

Marked Woman (1937)—As the smart, lively young clip-joint hostess who turns police informer, Bette Davis is the embodiment of the sensational side of thirties movies. This racketeering melodrama is based on the career of Lucky Luciano, who lived high at the Waldorf-Astoria on the proceeds of a thousand prostitutes. In the film, Eduardo Ciannelli plays the role, with Humphrey Bogart (never at his best when cast on the side of officialdom—but then, who is?) taking over Thomas E. Dewey's function as prosecutor. The film has the tawdry simplicities of many of the thirties movies that were built out of headline stories, but it also has more impact than most of the melodramas played out in more elevated surroundings. Lloyd Bacon directed. (Regency; Sept. 15-16.)

My Brilliant Career (1980)—This strong, consistently rewarding Australian film about the coming of age of a spirited, overintelligent young woman living on a New South Wales cattle station at the turn of the century looks and feels and moves along like a first-class old-fashioned novel. The heroine, Sybylla Melvyn, is beautifully played by the resourceful and striking Judy Davis, and the movie is sustained by a great number of splendidly drawn and well-acted secondary characters, and by the restraint of its director, Gillian Armstrong. With Sam Neill, Pat Kennedy, Peter Whitford, Wendy Hughes, and Aileen Brittain. (57th St. Playhouse; starting Sept. 13.)

My Favorite Wife (1940)—Tennyson wrote "Enoch Arden" in 1864, and the movies have been making versions of it ever since D. W. Griffith did it in 1908. This one is the most famous and the funniest. On the day Cary Grant (as Nick Arden) marries Gail Patrick, his wife Irene Dunne, shipwrecked seven years before, comes home. She follows the newlyweds on their honeymoon, prevents the consummation of the marriage, and, like a smart kitty, purrs herself to an ultimate victory. Garson Kanin was twenty-seven (and at his liveliest) when he directed this screwball-classic hit. With Randolph Scott. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 19.)

Prizzi's Honor—This John Huston picture has a ripe and daring comic tone. It revels voluptuously in the murderous finagling of the members of a Brooklyn Mafia family, and rejoices in their scams. Jack Nicholson's average-guyness as Charley, the clan's enforcer, is the film's touchstone: this is a baroque comedy about people who behave in ordinary ways in grotesque circumstances. Everything in this picture works with everything else—which is to say that John Huston has it all in the palm of his big, bony hand. With William Hickey, Anjelica Huston, Kathleen Turner, and John Randolph. (7/1/85) (R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Cinema 3, and Cinema Studio.)

Purple Rain (1984)—In this fictional bio, Prince, the pansexual rock star, appears as the Kid, a vulnerable loner and struggling musician. Prince's songs are a cry for the free expression of sexual energy, and his suffering is a supercharged version of what made James Dean the idol of young moviegoers—this Kid is "hurting." And this picture knows no restraint. It was directed by Albert Magnoli, but Prince is in charge, and he knows how he wants to appear—like Dionysus crossed with a convent girl on her first bender. It's pretty terrible (there are no real scenes—just flashy, fractured rock-video moments), but those willing to accept Prince as a sexual messiah aren't likely to mind. With Patty Apollonia Kotero, Morris Day, Jerome Benton, and Clarence Williams III. (8/20/84) (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; Sept. 20-21.)

Rambo: First Blood Part II—Audiences hoot at it and get a little charged up at the same time. The proceedings are directed by George P. Cosmatos, and he gives the near-psychotic material a veneer of professionalism, but the looniness is always there. The film's star and progenitor is Sylvester Stallone, and the way he's photographed he's huge—our national palooka. This humanoid Christ figure with brown leather skin and symmetrical scars goes into Vietnam and brings out a bunch of our missing-in-action men. With Julia Nickson, Richard Crenna, and Charles Napier. (6/17/85) (Criterion Theatres.)

Reds (1981)—Warren Beatty, who was the producer, the director, and the co-writer, also plays the hero, the American journalist John Reed, who took part in the Bolshevik Revolution and wrote "Ten Days That Shook the World." Diane Keaton plays Reed's wife, the independent-minded Louise Bryant. Beatty is often touching, and he does some of the best acting he has ever done, but he plays so much on what the audience responds to in him—the all-American combination of innocence and earnestness—that he's in danger of turning into Li'l Abner. The subject—the romantic life of an American Communist—may be daring, but the moviemaking is extremely traditional, with Beatty playing a man who dies for an ideal. It's rather a sad movie, because it isn't really very good. With Jack Nicholson as Eugene O'Neill, and Maureen Stapleton, Gene Hackman, Paul Sorvino, the novelist Jerzy Kosinski, and Edward Herrmann. (Cinema Village; Sept. 15.)

The Roaring Twenties (1939)—The title and the names of the stars—James Cagney and Humphrey Bogart—make it sound like a lot more fun than it is. They play underprivileged kids who grow up together, come back from the First World War, and get into the rackets. The movie has a very mechanical and moralistic view of character; nobody ever says or does anything that surprises you. With Gladys George, Priscilla Lane, Paul Kelly, Jeffrey Lynn, and Frank McHugh. Directed by Raoul Walsh. (Regency; Sept. 15-16.)

Sahara (1943)—Bogart and an all-male supporting cast that includes J. Carrol Naish and Rex Ingram, in a lost-patrol-type story set during the Second World War. Bogart is a sergeant in command of an American tank that's been cut off from the rest of the Army during the British retreat to El Alamein. The tank keeps rolling, picking up strays along the way until it has a full Hollywood ethnic complement—a Texan, a Brooklynite, a white Southerner, a black Sudanese, and so on. Excitingly staged and stunningly photographed, the film might have been a classic wartime melodrama if it weren't so offensively didactic. Directed by Zoltán Korda. (Regency; Sept. 17-18.)

The Shooting Party—Working with Julian Bond's adaptation of Isabel Colegate's novel and a dream of a cast—James Mason (in his final movie), John Gielgud, Dorothy Tutin, Edward Fox, Gordon Jackson, Cheryl Campbell, Judi Bowker, Rupert Frazer, Aharon Ipalé—the director Alan Bridges carries the Masterpiece Theatre approach to the level of art. In the English countryside in the autumn of 1913, a large number of landed gentry, aristocrats, servants, gamekeepers, beaters, and loaders gather for a three-day shoot. Colegate's tone is lightly self-mocking, and the film is full of the English affection for gentle lunacy. This is one of the rare movies that can be said to be for an educated audience without that being a putdown. As the host, an aging baronet who's conscious that he's losing his grip, Mason gives the film its immediacy. (6/17/85) (Quad Cinema.)

Silverado—The director, Lawrence Kasdan, uses accomplished actors: the four heroes journeying west to Silverado in the eighteen-eighties are played by Kevin Kline, Scott Glenn, Kevin Costner, and Danny Glover, and they're variously involved with Linda Hunt, Rosanna Arquette, Brian Dennehy, John Cleese, and Jeff Goldblum. But the atmosphere is arch and uninvolving, and these actors don't seem sure what their characters are meant to be. The film is like a homage to the expensive Western; it's so opulent it has a nouveau-riche aura about it. (7/29/85) (23rd St. West Triplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Coronet; Sept. 11. . . . ¶ Bay Cinema; starting Sept. 12.)

Taxi Driver (1976)—Robert De Niro is in almost every frame of Martin Scorsese's feverish, horrifyingly funny movie about a lonely New York cabdriver. De Niro's inflamed, brimming eyes are the focal point of the compositions. He's Travis Bickle, an outsider who can't find any point of entry into human society. Surrounded by the night world of the uprooted—whores, pimps, transients—he hates New York with a Biblical fury, and its filth and smut obsess him. Scorsese achieves the quality of trance in some scenes, and the whole movie has a sense of vertigo. With Harvey Keitel, Cybill Shepherd, Jodie Foster, Peter Boyle, and Albert Brooks. (Cinema Village; Sept. 16-17.)

Year of the Dragon—Stan White (Mickey Rourke), a New York police captain, is assigned to put a damper on the murderous youth gangs who are disrupting life in Chinatown. But Stan—a synthesis of Rambo and Dirty Harry—can't live with compromise; he starts to create chaos in the community so that (in some unexplained way) he can tear out the roots of crime. The movie is a form of hysterical, rabble-rousing pulp, yet it isn't involving; it doesn't have the propulsion of good pulp storytelling. It's sunk in torpor, and Stan, who seems to be continuing the Vietnam War in Chinatown, has no core; he's all blowhard pose. Loosely derived from the novel by Robert Daley, the tawdry script—it gives the characters a flat, stunted vocabulary of about twenty-five words, most of them the basic four-letter expletives—was written by Oliver ("Midnight Express") Stone and Michael Cimino, who directed. The only performance that has any intensity is the quiet one given by John Lone as the sneaky, new young Chinese Godfather—he's Cimino's Heart of Darkness and Yellow Peril, too. Lone is so fine-drawn and elegant he just about turns the movie upside down; this gangster comes across as the only character with any brains or emotional life. The grating-voiced Ariane, a model of Dutch and Japanese parentage, is the TV-newscaster heroine; she's officious and nostrilly, like an Oriental Ali MacGraw. With Ray Barry, Caroline Kava, Dennis Dun, and Leonard Termo. Parts of Chinatown's Mott Street were re-created in Dino De Laurentiis' new studios in Wilmington, North Carolina. (9/9/85) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Orpheum, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; through Sept. 19.)

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A FRIEND—a man in his forties who lives and works in Manhattan—writes:

Last winter, an aunt of mine who is eighty-five deeded to me her property in northwestern Connecticut. My older sister and I spent a large part of many of the summers of our childhood there, and we became very close to my aunt, who grew to be a sort of vacation mother to us—I'm sure that's why she chose me as her heir. My sister died a long time ago. The place consists of about seventy-five acres, a small, ramshackle summer cottage, and a few outbuildings, in even worse repair than the cottage. My aunt kept what the law calls a "life estate" in the holdings. That means that she has the use of them until she dies. (She did that because she hopes—vainly, I'm afraid—to be able to leave the nursing home here in the city which she entered last fall, after a drastic physical turn for the worse, and occupy her cottage again, maybe this fall, maybe next spring.) But I own it.

I own it. What does that mean, I wondered when the signing of the deed took place, in my aunt's room in the nursing home on a frigid February day. Lots of other things were also going through my mind at the time. The room was cheerful, with a generous block of the cold winter sun coming into it from over the Hudson through two large west-facing windows, and the institution as a whole was a pleasant surprise: the staff seemed capable and humane, the facilities were clean without being antiseptic, the residents appeared to be in good spirits. I may have put too much stock in the fact that the attendant who showed me to my aunt's room called her not by her first name but by the more respectful "Miss ——." But no number of nice incidentals could have leavened the essential sadness that inheres in that sort of institutionalization, or made my lawyer's solicitousness toward my aunt less palpably artificial, or redeemed the disgraceful baronial triumph that surfaced in me like something out of a swamp, or, least of all, restored youth and mirth and energy to my aunt, so I tried to lose myself in abstract reflections about what it meant to own part of a planet. It helped me get out of there without weeping or upbraiding the lawyer or doing a victory dance, but I didn't reach any conclusions. Not that I really expected to.

The question turned out to be more than a temporary shelter against troubling feelings, however. Through the rest of the winter and the spring and most of the summer, I would catch myself thinking about the seventy-five acres up there in Connecticut in some vaguely mystified way. The biggest thing I'd ever owned before was a car, I realized. This was not only quantitatively but qualitatively different, as the legal term "real property" seems to indicate, implicitly relegating to ontological inferiority everything that doesn't fit its definition—"land, and generally whatever is erected or growing upon or affixed to land." "I own land," I found myself saying suddenly and in bafflement to my wife at dinner a week or so after the deed was executed. She gave me a puzzled look, shot with a little disapproval, in return. "O.K., *we* own land," I said. "But I still don't understand it." I turned to my two-year-old son, sitting in his high chair between us, eating an apple. "Someday you will probably own land," I said. Maybe the fact that my aunt at least theoretically retained some rights in the place was what was bewildering me—putting the whole matter in a sort of limbo. I didn't know. But I did know that I felt the same kind of unspecified bafflement when the lawyer called me in March to tell me the deed to "my" land had been filed. Then, in May, when I saw a squirrel running in terror from a dog in Central Park I wondered, uneasily, what obscure things the wildlife on "my" land were up to at that moment, and when, in June, I heard some barker on TV begin to detail the inducements that tri-state Honda dealers were holding out to potential car buyers I apprehended, with strange astonishment, that one of the states involved contained "my" land.

I didn't get up there until a couple of weekends ago. One thing and another had made it necessary for me to stay in the city, and I had handled the place through the caretaker who has worked for my aunt for more than twenty years—not that there was much in the way of handling to do. The renovations that the cottage needs and the landscaping that has to be done will have to wait for a while. But finally I decided to go and take a look at the place—I suppose in the hope that doing so would make my ownership of this real property more real and comprehensible to me. I left very early in the morning of what promised to be a gorgeous day, and arrived just as the sun was cresting the tops of the trees, two hours later. It is a very lovely site. The cottage stands halfway up one of the rolling Litchfield hills, above it are meadows strewn with wildflowers, and a clear stream meanders down from the fields and forms a small pond, populous with bullfrogs, a hundred yards from the highway but a whole world away from it. The only thing that seemed new now, besides the inroads that time and nature had made, was a large "No Trespassing" sign—in black letters on a dark-red background—that had been nailed to the trunk of the tall locust tree at the foot of the driveway. I guessed that the caretaker had put it there after I'd told him that neither my aunt nor anyone else from our family would be using the place this summer. I chuckled over how little application the sign had to me. I no doubt owned the sign itself.

Being there didn't help with what I was beginning to suspect was a problem that branded me as an overintellectual urbanite. I wandered around—up the hill and over the meadows, along the stream, through the orchard in back of the cottage, across the semi-neglected lawns—in a haze of silly questions. Did I own the water in the brook? The ragweed pollen that was making me sneeze? Did I own the soil and rocks down to the earth's core? I figured that I didn't own the scarlet tanager that I saw flying like a winged flame in the orchard, but had I owned it when it was a nestling, if it came from that orchard in the first place? As an egg? Did I own the dew? The place seemed increasingly vast and recondite, and I began to feel measly, like a flea trekking over the endless hide of some behemoth. It had innumerable aspects, and they kept changing: the light changed, and therefore so did the shadows; the grass sprang up after I trod it down; blossoms opened secretly; the breeze created out of a single aspen a universe of constant, tiny alterations.

Three crows near the top of an old, nearly dead pine tree gave me a send-off of raucous jeers as I got back into my car after a couple of hours of perambulation and metaphysical wool-gathering. What possible kind of suzerainty could one hold over something that was so large and, more important, so shifty? Oh, well—time would probably appropriate it for me, or getting my hands dirty in it would. And anyway it seemed especially foolish to be looking so sizable a gift horse in the mouth. As I backed out of the driveway, using the rearview mirror to navigate—it's harder for me now than it used to be to twist around—that livid "No Trespassing" sign on the locust tree caught my eye again. It struck me then that my ownership of this otherwise unpossessable entity meant most radically that after my aunt died I could, if I wanted to, keep anyone else from going on it. Maybe time will also lead me to some more positive definition or interpretation of the whole matter, but as I drove away I said to myself, "No wonder the crows were mocking me."

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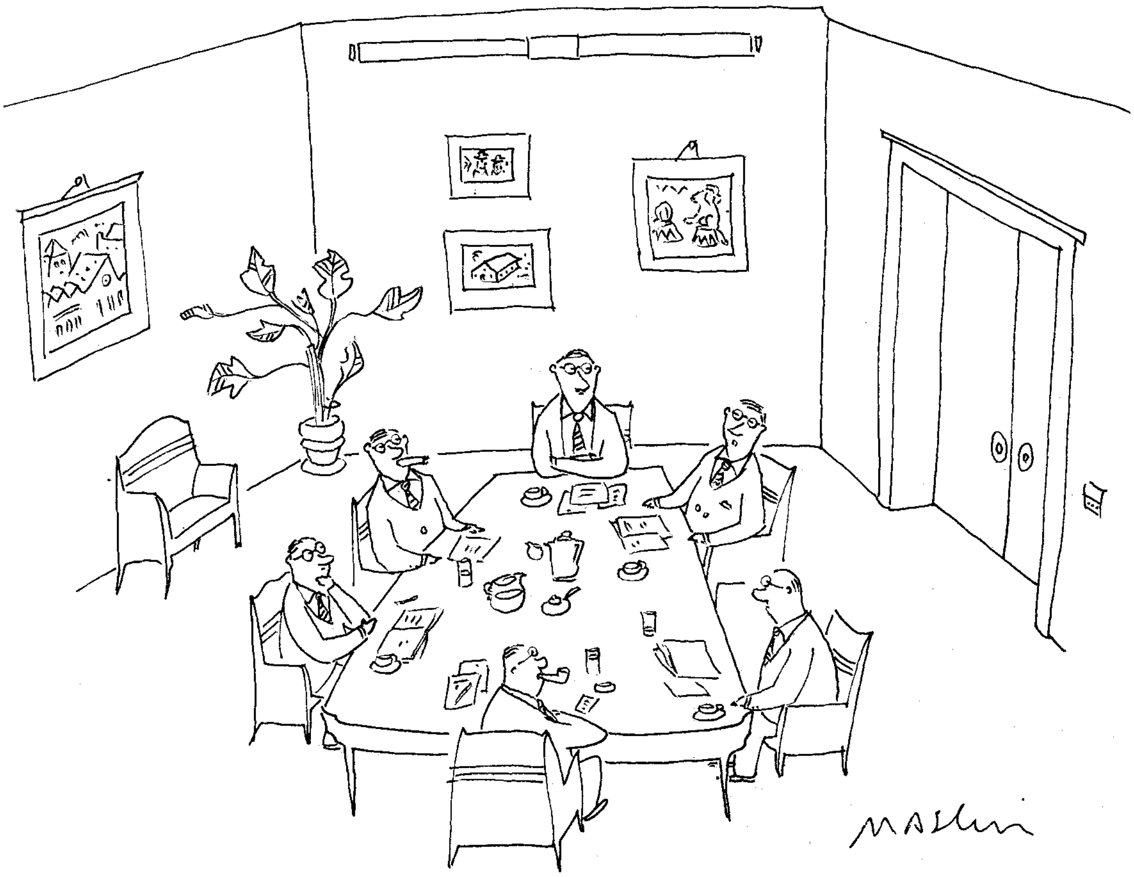
Soviet TV

SINCE August of last year, professors and students at Columbia University's W. Averell Harriman Institute for Advanced Study of the Soviet Union have been able to view daily, live and in color, news and other broadcasts of the Soviet television-network system. The routine reception of such broadcasts here in the city, which for practical purposes had been too difficult to achieve until then, was made possible by the installation of a large directional dish antenna on the roof of the building housing the Institute—an antenna that tracks the Soviet communications satellites that relay the broadcasts to stations throughout the Soviet Union. One recent afternoon, to find out how faculty members and students at the Harriman Institute have been reacting to the broadcasts, we paid a visit to Dr. Jonathan Sanders, its assistant director, at his office, a small and book-crammed room on the twelfth floor of that building—a rather fortresslike fifteen-story poured-concrete structure on the east side of the Columbia campus. We found Dr. Sanders, a curly-haired, black-bearded, and energetic-mannered man in his mid-thirties, enthusiastic over the unusual opportunities to gain a better understanding of everyday Soviet life which he felt that the regular reception of the broadcasts has been affording him, his colleagues, and the Institute's students.

"In the past, it had seemed to us that our windows into the Soviet Union tended to be, relatively speaking, on a limited, traditional scale, in that so much of what we were exposed to consisted of formal reflections of official Soviet policy," Dr. Sanders said. "For example, as far as cultural affairs were concerned, what we were exposed to was essentially high culture—the works of the best Russian novelists and playwrights, the productions of the ballet and the opera, and so on—all of which was very fine, but we felt that for the purposes of our studies we weren't getting enough of what was being said and propagandized to the vast majority of the Soviet people. We felt we were missing a sense of popular culture as it was being conveyed to the Archie Bunkers in the United States, or to what in the Soviet Union are known as the kvass patriots—kvass being a drink made out of fermented bread. Considering how much television has done during the past couple of decades to give us this sort of insight into popular culture in the United States, and how profoundly television has influenced the ways of this country, we felt that in such a vast country as the Soviet Union the electronic means of communication—especially television—must be having a no less important effect on its life, and that if only we had access to this popular medium par excellence we could acquire a new and different or supplementary understanding of many things going on in the Soviet Union. Bear in mind that two hundred and sixty or seventy million people in the Soviet Union get most of their information from Soviet television rather than from *Pravda*. And now that we're watching Soviet television regularly we're beginning to get a sense of how powerful a medium television is over there. We see that the Soviets have telegenic leaders—Gorbachev in particular. He comes across very sharply on Soviet television by comparison with the previous leadership. Almost every night last September and October, we were able to watch Chernenko making appearances on Soviet television. We used to count the number of times he coughed, and if he had a chest microphone you could hear his chest; everybody sat there feeling sorry for this old man. And just the contrast between these appearances and those of the very active Gorbachev—such a vital person—has been enormous. We've seen Gorbachev when he went to Kiev, when he went to Leningrad, giving speeches, mingling with and talking to workers out in the crowds—something that started with Andropov, by the way. Gorbachev must make a very sharp impression on Soviet television audiences, a sense

d. ehrenberg



"And now at this point in the meeting I'd like to shift the blame away from me and onto someone else."

of somebody moving things along, generating a feeling of optimism—that comes across so clearly.

"We find that having daily direct access to Soviet television programming has helped our understanding of Soviet life in many ways. The most prosaic use we've been able to make of Soviet television is, of course, to keep our students' knowledge of the Russian language up to date, since through it they are exposed to extremely contemporary Russian, without the usual delays—no waiting for new textbooks to be printed, or waiting for a chance to make contact with people who have emigrated from the Soviet Union."

Dr. Sanders said that in watching Soviet television he and his students were constantly reminded that except for China the Soviet Union is the only great country in the world that doesn't show the influence of American television. And, even so, he remarked, there *are* fringe areas of the Soviet Union where citizens are able to watch American TV programs; for example, in Latvia and Estonia TV signals can be picked up from Finland. "I understand that some people in Estonia record American programs on videotape and send the videotapes to their friends across the country," Dr. Sanders said. "I had one student who had managed to get over here from Tallinn. The second day after he landed in America, he came to see me. I'm used to seeing these émigrés, and usually they can't speak English well—they just want to get work. This fellow spoke beautiful colloquial American English, and I hired him as a student worker. I asked him how he had learned to speak such good colloquial American, and he said that it was easy—that while he lived in Tallinn he had been able to watch programs like 'Kojak,' 'Charlie's Angels,' and 'Three's Company' on Finnish TV. Well, this kid, who was very able, breezed right through Columbia as a straight-A student."

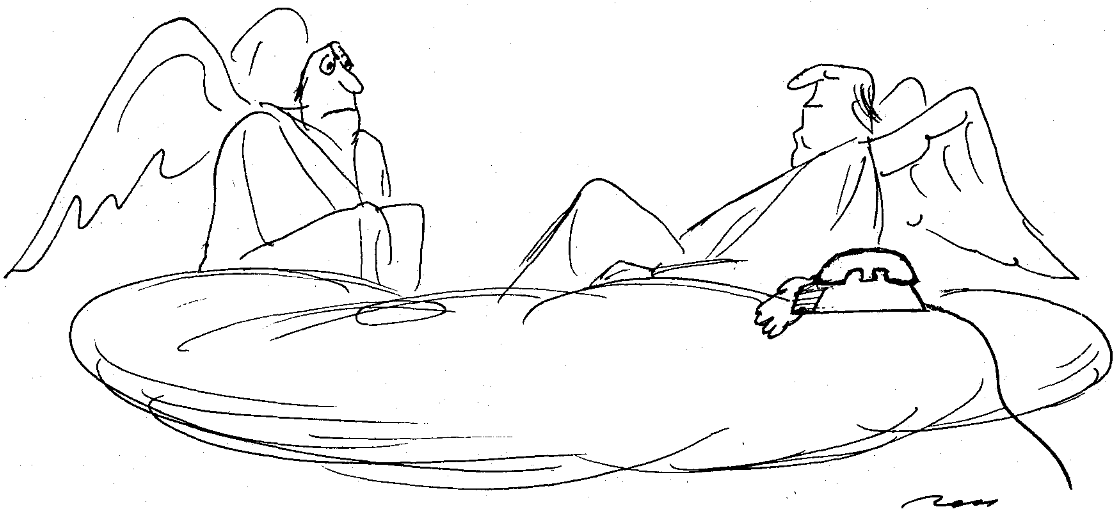
Dr. Sanders told us that in watching Soviet television news and other programs students at the Institute have been bemused by the different style of Soviet announcers—none of the smooth, blithe appearance and manner they're used to here, and none of the young blond women who don't wear glasses and who look straight into the camera lens while they read off the teleprompter. "On Soviet television, our students see women who, for goodness' sake, look like anybody's *mother*," Dr. Sanders said. "I mean, they're often middle-aged, often a little dowdy, they may have wrinkles, they look far from picture perfect, and they don't look into teleprompters, because the Soviet Union doesn't have teleprompters. But they do have good diction and they pronounce their words well. Another thing that's interesting to the students is how different it is to watch news programs in which America is not presented as the center of the universe. Generally speaking, on Soviet television the news about the home front comes first, whether it's official pronouncements of the Party or reports on the grain harvest, which is coming in right now. International news usually comes quite far down in the show, because it's *Russia* that is the center of the universe. Sometimes the Soviet TV reporting on international affairs will be perfectly straightforward. On the day of our Presidential election, for example, if you translated what they were saying on Soviet television you'd find that it could almost come out of any American network or local station: 'The vote tabulation is in. . . . Ronald Reagan appears to have won the election by an overwhelming majority.' No comment, no editorials—just straight reporting. Usually, though, news about the United States is anti-American news, whether it's about demonstrations in Europe against American nuclear policy or about such things as that Wheeling steel strike. A little while ago, I saw a report on an anti-apartheid demonstration in Washington, mostly by American blacks. The Soviet newscaster on the spot told the viewers, 'We're the only television crew here. The demonstrators told us they telephoned the American networks about the demonstration, but the networks didn't bother to come.' Well, they'd come, all right, but they'd come a week earlier, and the networks would have just been repeating their news report. There's a lot of that sort of thing. But while many of the Soviet people see this kind of reporting and think, So that's what's going on in the West, others tend to view this kind of reporting with built-in filters.

"Our students watching Soviet programming often remark that the people they see don't look very much different from us; while the fashions may look a little different, and the students may make fun of that, many things they see seem to them surprisingly up-to-date. A student may say about young people in a shot, 'Look, they're in running shoes, too.' As for me, I keep seeing all sorts of unexpected things on these programs. I didn't realize, for example, that there's a rather large industrial enterprise there that is making something like our Windsurfers, and these have suddenly given rise to a very popular new sport in the Soviet Union. Not long ago, Soviet television put on a program about a cement factory, and in the course of it the fact emerged that they have hang gliding in the Soviet Union. That was news to me. One thing our students have tended to find is that qualitatively the range of Soviet television is broader than ours. Some of the better programs are at least as good as our best, and the worst programs are much worse than our worst, and other programs are just so boring. How many programs about the harvest coming in can you see?"

Dr. Sanders took us up to the roof of the building to show us the dish antenna through which the Soviet broadcasts are received, and told us that the dish, which is sixteen feet in diameter, was designed by a young electronics expert called Ken Schaffer, who is the head of the Orbita Technologies Corporation. Then Dr. Sanders showed us into a room, near his office, where the broadcasts are viewed. A small, narrow room with yellow walls, it contains a few chairs, racks of electronic equipment, a Sony monitoring screen, and two Apple computer terminals—one on a desk and one on the floor. Dr. Sanders explained that the operations of the satellite dish on the roof are controlled by computer programs in the room's electronic equipment—they cause the dish to lock on the movements of a series of four Soviet communications satellites that make up what is known as the Molniya system. These satellites, unlike American domestic satellites, do not remain in geostationary orbit but orbit the earth in a highly inclined ellipse around the poles. "The perigee of this orbit is down near Australia, and its apogee is somewhere over Hudson Bay," Dr. Sanders said. "As the satellites, in series, come up over Hudson Bay, which is the best point for transmission, the Soviets send a signal up from Moscow, and then the signal goes down to earth in a series of relays. We happen to pick up the relay that goes farthest east, and the effect is that we're in a sixteen-hour time difference with Moscow—twice the normal time difference between Moscow and New York."

At exactly 4 P.M. (8 A.M. the next day in Moscow), we saw the live Molniya transmission start up, with the appearance on the monitor, against a musical background, of the logo and accompanying graphics for a program called, in Russian, "Morning Gymnastics." The logo consisted of a pictographic representation of a human figure, rendered in yellow-orange in a hands-on-hips and legs-apart stance, and surrounded by an elliptical design of rotating strips of different colors around which were the Cyrillic letters of the program's title. As the strips of color revolved, the pictographic figure became animated to the extent of raising its arms above its head; then it reverted to a motionless state. As it did so, the colored strips in the logo reversed their original direction of flow. (All these graphics were obviously computer-generated, just as they would be for a comparable show in this country.) There followed a closeup of a dark-haired woman in a yellowish warmup jacket, who greeted the audience with "Good morning, Comrades" and went on to inform the viewers of the kind of exercises that were to be demonstrated on that day's program. The demonstrators were a young woman in a black leotard and a man wearing a red top and black pants. They were working in a rather cramped beige set with a sharply curved backdrop, which didn't allow them much room to move around. They exercised their legs, arms, and torsos while standing, crouching, or lying on handsome Persian-style rugs—the man on a square rug, the woman on an oblong one. On the left side of the screen, a demurely dressed young woman seated at a grand piano tinkled out various Russian melodies as the performers did their thing, except that at one point she segued into "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and continued with it for a minute or two. While the performers went through an exercise, the offscreen voice of the dark-haired woman explained its rudiments and urged the audience to join in, saying something like "Hands on hips, now—one, two, three, *four*." It all had a sort of old-time Jack LaLanne feeling to it, but the color values and the detail of the images were remarkably good—even clearer than those on American broadcasts, because the Soviets use a six-hundred-and-twenty-five-line system of transmission instead of our five-hundred-and-twenty-five-line system.

"How would you feel if your satellite-receiving dish developed some sort of permanent system failure, your monitoring screen went blank, and you weren't able to get



any more of this Soviet television programming?" we asked Dr. Sanders.

"I think I'd go through a kind of withdrawal," he said.

When at the Waldorf

ROGER AXTELL greeted us with a smile at the door to his Waldorf suite one morning not long ago. "Good morning," he said.

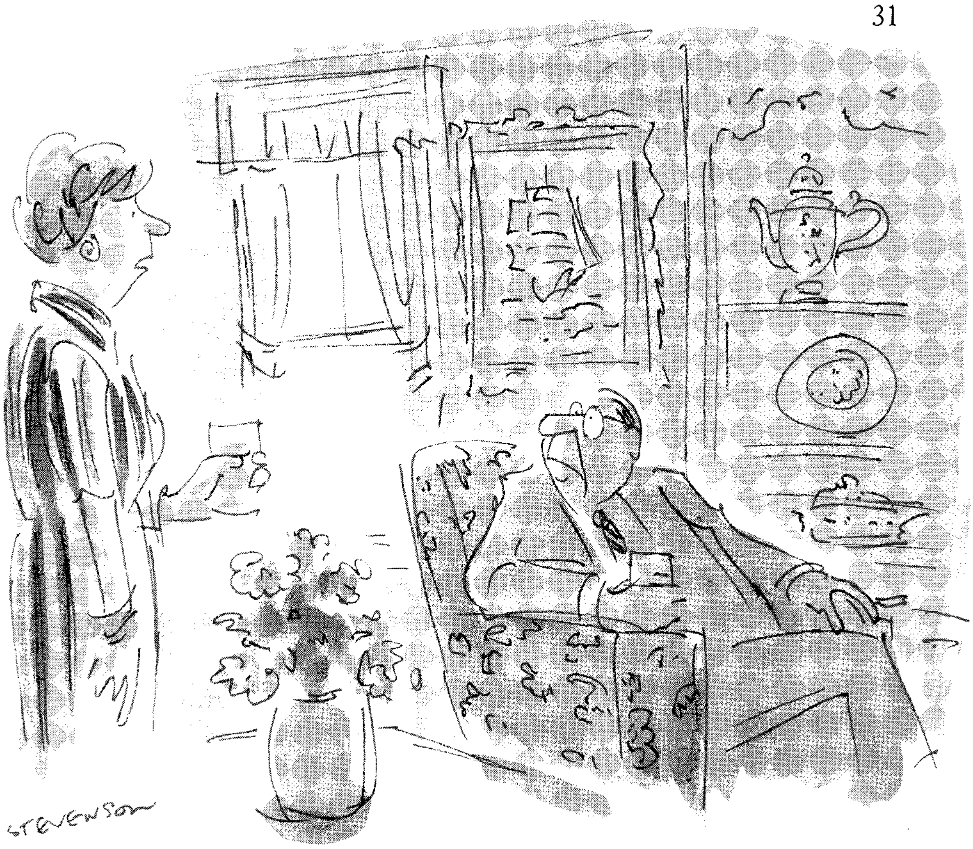
"Nice day," we said.

"Very nice," he said.

"Tell us about your book," we said.

"Well, it's only in America that we'd just start talking like that—that we'd get right down to business," he said. "Anywhere else, it would be rude."

Mr. Axtell lives in Janesville, Wisconsin, the birthplace of the Gideon Bible Society (unless you tilt toward the Boscobel, Wisconsin, theory). He has travelled the globe for twenty-two years for the Parker Pen Company, and now he has written "Do's and Taboos Around the World." He is an internationalist Emily Post. The Parker Pen Company, which also has its headquarters in Janesville, flies flags from all over the world along its entrance, and once, thirty years ago, it paid all its workers in Mexican money to make them appreciate the importance of foreign sales. "People are still talking about Peso Payday," said Mr. Axtell, whose book is nicely balanced between things to do and things never to do no matter what, such as giving a clock to a Chinese person. (The word for "clock" is just too close to a word for the farewell visit to the dying.) In Hong Kong, always propose your toast at the onset of the shark's-fin-soup course. If a Saudi businessman grabs your hand and flaps his eyelashes at you, it is a sign of great respect. Should some guests visit you from abroad, don't serve corn on the cob. ("They might find it gross, the way we eat it—the typewriter sounds that are involved.") In certain countries (Mr. Axtell wasn't sure just which), you can go ahead and give someone a pair of scissors as long as you put a penny in the box, too. "Jogging is pretty well accepted the world over," he said. Americans tend to stand just far enough apart when talking so that, arms extended, they could insert their thumbs in each other's ears. The way to reach a Russian's heart is to give him an English sheepdog. In milder climates, the violin is mildly obscene—the hotter the clime, the greater the obscenity. Always let a Ghanaian win at tennis.



"I'm curious. You never had a song in your heart, did you?"

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We made some of these up, unfortunately.

Three Sisters

WE know, personally, one stock-car driver, one titan of the sour-cream industry, one man who tells you what furniture to buy depending on your astrological sign, one woman who balances eggs on their ends (the fat ends) during the vernal equinox, and between seven and eight hundred screenwriters. Some of that number are nice, and some are talented, but only three are also sisters. Alice, Nell, and Claire Scovell graduated from Harvard in 1980, 1982, and last spring, respectively; they stand four feet eleven inches, five feet, and five feet two inches; and they have just finished work on the first of what they hope will be many comedies—"That Certain Glow." Alice took an open-ended leave from her job as a lawyer at Sullivan & Cromwell to help her sisters write the screenplay, which concerns a beautiful woman, a rumpled inventor, a failing cosmetics company, and a troupe of Russian dancers encouraged by their government to defect.

"Alice was riding on the bus one day. A woman got on who was so pretty that Alice thought, Who would ever take her seriously?" Claire said. "Then we thought, What about a movie where a woman makes herself less attractive to win the man?"

"The heroine is named Avis, which is what we call Alice in real life, but in the movie she's kind and funny and successful and attractive—she's sort of patterned after me," Nell said.

"It's easier to write comedy with other people," Claire said. "By yourself, you don't know if it's funny. But you can say something to two other people and see if they laugh. Of course, we all have the same sense of humor. We grew up watching the Marx Brothers, Gilbert and Sullivan, Monty Python, the Hare Krishnas."

"We always wanted to be the modern-day Brontë sisters, and there was only one problem," said Nell. "I was going to be Emily, and Alice was going to be Charlotte, and all that was left for Claire was Anne—and Anne just wrote some stupid poems and died young. So we forgot about novels and went into screenplays."

"Our brother, Ted, said we could be Comden and Green," Claire added. "All we'd have to do is change our names."

WHAT DID WE DO WRONG?

THE first woman to reach the big leagues said she wanted to be treated like any other rookie, but she didn't have to worry about that. The Sparrows nicknamed her Chesty and then Big Numbers the first week of spring training, and loaded her bed at the Ramada with butterscotch pudding. Only the writers made a big thing about her being the First Woman. The Sparrows treated her like dirt.

Annie Szemanski arrived in camp fresh from the Federales League of Bolivia, the fourth second baseman on the Sparrows roster, and when Drayton stepped in a hole and broke his ankle Hemmie put her in the lineup, hoping she would break hers. "This was the front office's bright idea," he told the writers. "Off the record, I think it stinks." But when she got in she looked so good that by the third week of March she was a foregone conclusion. Even Hemmie had to admit it. A .346 average tells no lies. He disliked her purely because she was a woman—there was nothing personal about it. Because she was a woman, she was given the manager's dressing room, and Hemmie had to dress with the team. He was sixty-one, a heavyweight, and he had a possum tattooed on his belly alongside the name "Georgene," so he was shy about taking his shirt off in front of people. He hated her for making it necessary. Other than that, he thought she was a tremendous addition to the team.

Asked how she felt being the first woman to make a major-league team, she said, "Like a pig in mud," or words to that effect, and then turned and released a squirt of tobacco juice from the wad of rum-soaked plug in her right cheek. She chewed a rare brand of plug called Stuff It, which she learned to chew when she was playing Nicaraguan summer ball. She told the writers, "They were so mean to me down there you couldn't write it in your newspaper. I took a gun everywhere I went, even to bed. *Especially* to bed. Guys were after me like you can't believe. That's when I started chewing tobacco—because no matter how bad anybody treats you, it's not as bad as this. This is the worst chew in the world. After this, everything else is peaches and cream." The writers elected Gentleman Jim, the Sparrows' P.R. guy, to bite off a chunk and tell them how it tasted, and as he sat and chewed it tears ran down his old sunburnt cheeks and he couldn't talk for a while. Then he whispered, "You've been chewing this for two years? God, I had no idea it was so hard to be a woman."

When thirty-two thousand fans came to Cold Spring Stadium on April 4th for Opening Day and saw the scrappy little freckle-faced woman with tousled black hair who they'd been reading about for almost two months, they were dizzy with devotion. They chanted her name and waved Annie flags and Annie caps ($8.95 and $4.95) and held up hand-painted bedsheets ("EVERY DAY IS LADIES' DAY," "A WOMAN'S PLACE—AT SECOND BASE," "E.R.A. & R.B.I." "THE GAME AIN'T OVER TILL THE BIG LADY BATS"), but when they saw No. 18 trot out to second with a load of chew as big as if she had the mumps it was a surprise. Then, bottom of the second, when she leaned over in the on-deck circle and dropped a stream of brown juice in the sod, the stadium experienced a moment of thoughtful silence.

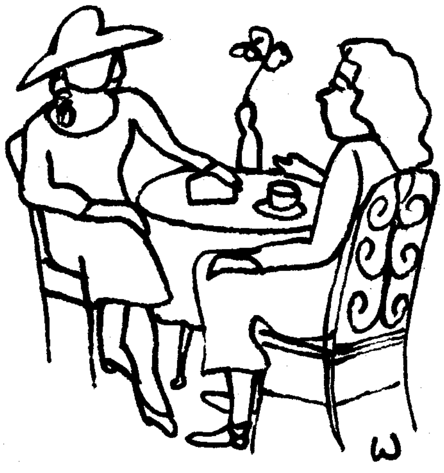
One man in Section 31 said, "Hey, what's the beef? She can chew if she wants to. This is 1987. Grow up."

"I guess you're right," his next-seat neighbor said. "My first reaction was nausea, but I think you're right."

"Absolutely. She's a woman, but, more than that, she's a *person*."

Other folks said, "I'm with you on that. A woman can carry a quarter pound of chew in her cheek and spit in public, same as any man—why should there be any difference?"

And yet. Nobody wanted to say this, but the plain truth was that No. 18 was not handling her chew well at all. Juice ran down her chin and dripped onto her shirt. She's bit off more than she can chew, some people thought to themselves, but they didn't want to say that.



Arnie (the Old Gardener) Brixius mentioned it ever so gently in his "Hot Box" column the next day:

> It's only this scribe's opinion, but isn't it about time baseball cleaned up its act and left the tobacco in the locker? Surely big leaguers can go two hours without nicotine. Many a fan has turned away in disgust at the sight of grown men (and now a member of the fair sex) with a faceful, spitting gobs of the stuff in full view of paying customers. Would Frank Sinatra do this onstage? Or Anne Murray? Nuff said.

END of April, Annie was batting .278, with twelve R.B.I.s, which for the miserable Sparrows was stupendous, and at second base she was surprising a number of people, including base runners who thought she'd be a pushover on the double play. A runner heading for second quickly found out that Annie had knees like ball-peen hammers and if he tried to eliminate her from the play she might eliminate him from the rest of the week. One night, up at bat against the Orioles, she took a step toward the mound after an inside pitch and yelled some things, and when the dugouts emptied she was in the thick of it with men who had never been walloped by a woman before. The home-plate ump hauled her off a guy she was pounding the cookies out of, and a moment later he threw her out of the game for saying things to him, he said, that he had never heard in his nineteen years of umpiring. ("Like what, for example?" writers asked. "Just tell us one thing." But he couldn't; he was too upset.)

The next week, the United Baseball Office Workers local passed a resolution in support of Annie, as did the League of Women Voters and the Women's Softball Caucus, which stated, "Szemanski is a model for all women who are made to suffer guilt for their aggressiveness, and we declare our solidarity with her heads-up approach to the game. While we feel she is holding the bat too high and should bring her hips into her swing more, we're behind her one hundred per cent."

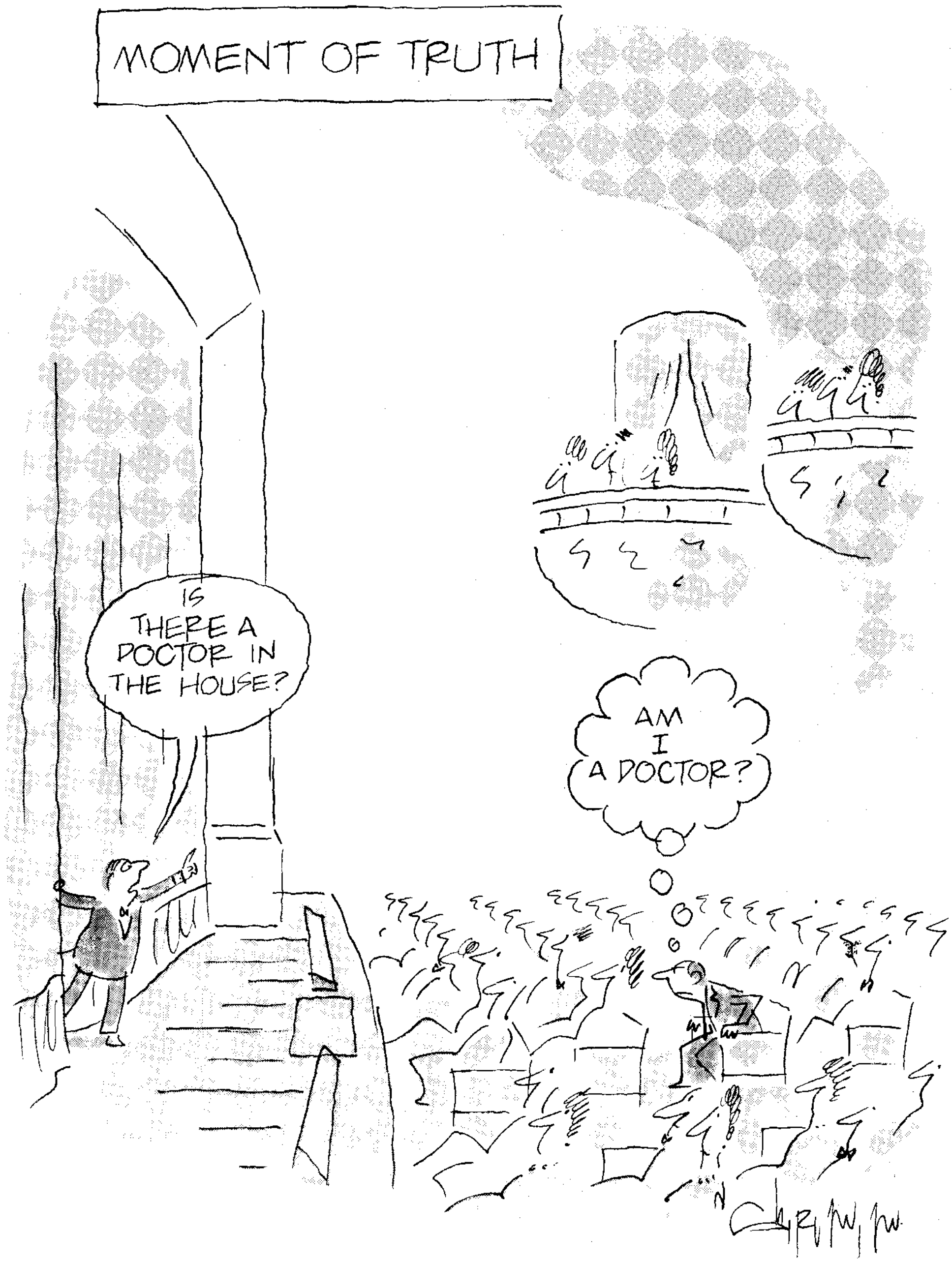
Then, May 4th, at home against Oakland—seventh inning, two outs, bases loaded—she dropped an easy pop-up and three runs came across home plate. The fans sent a few light boos her way to let her know they were paying attention, nothing serious or overtly political, just some folks grumbling, but she took a few steps toward the box seats and yelled something at them that sounded like—well, like something she shouldn't have said, and after the game she said some more things to the writers that Gentleman Jim pleaded with them not to print. One of them was Monica Lamarr, of the *Press*, who just laughed. She said, "Look. I spent two years in the Lifestyles section writing about motherhood vs. career and the biological clock. Sports is my way out of the gynecology ghetto, so don't ask me to eat this story. It's a hanging curve and I'm going for it. I'm never going to write about day care again." And she wrote it:

SZEMANSKI RAPS FANS
AS "SMALL PEOPLE"
AFTER DUMB ERROR GIVES
GAME TO A'S

FIRST WOMAN ATTRIBUTES BOOS
TO SEXUAL INADEQUACY IN STANDS

Jim made some phone calls and the story was yanked and only one truckload of papers went out with it, but word got around, and the next night, though Annie went three for four, the crowd was depressed, and even when she did great the rest of the home stand, and became the first woman to hit a major-league triple, the atmosphere at the ballpark was one of moodiness and deep hurt. Jim went to the men's room one night and found guys standing in line there, looking thoughtful and sad. One of them said, "She's a helluva ballplayer," and other guys murmured that yes, she was, and they wouldn't take anything away from her, she was great and it was wonderful that she had opened up baseball to women, and then they changed the subject to gardening, books, music, aesthetics, anything but baseball. They looked like men who had been stood up.

Gentleman Jim knocked on her door that night. She wore a blue chenille bathrobe flecked with brown tobacco-juice stains, and her black hair hung down in wet strands over her face. She spat into a Dixie cup she was carrying. "Hey! How the Fritos are you? I haven't seen your Big Mac for a while," she said, sort of. He told her she was a great person and a great ballplayer and that he loved her and wanted only the best for her, and he begged her to apologize to the fans. "Make a gesture—*anything*. They *want* to like you. Give them a chance to like you."


MOMENT OF TRUTH
IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?
AM I A DOCTOR?

She blew her nose into a towel. She said that she wasn't there to be liked, she was there to play ball.

IT was a good road trip. The Sparrows won five out of ten, lifting their heads off the canvas, and Annie raised her average to .291 and hit the first major-league home run ever by a woman, up into the left-field screen at Fenway. Sox fans stood and cheered for fifteen minutes. They whistled, they stamped, they pleaded, the Sparrows pleaded, umpires pleaded, but she refused to come out and tip her hat until the public-address announcer said, "No. 18, please come out of the dugout and take a bow. No. 18, the applause is for you and is not intended as patronizing in any way," and then she stuck her head out for 1.5 seconds and did not tip but only touched the brim. Later, she told the writers that just because people had expectations didn't mean she had to fulfill them—she used other words to explain this, but her general drift was that she didn't care very much about living up to anyone else's image of her, and if anyone thought she should, they could go watch wrist wrestling.

The forty thousand who packed Cold Spring Stadium June 6th to see the Sparrows play the Yankees didn't come for a look at Ron Guidry. Banners hung from the second deck: "What Did We Do Wrong?" and "Annie Come Home" and "We Love You, Why Do You Treat Us This Way?" and "If You Would Like to Discuss This in a Non-Confrontational, Mutually Respectful Way, Meet Us After the Game at Gate C." It was Snapshot Day, and all the Sparrows appeared on the field for photos with the fans except you know who. Hemmie begged her to go. "You owe it to them," he said.

"Owe?" she said. "*Owe?*"

"Sorry, wrong word," he said. "What if I put it this way: it's a sort of tradition."

"*Tradition?*" she said. "I'm supposed to worry about *tradition?*"

That day, she became the first woman to hit .300. A double in the fifth inning. The scoreboard flashed the message, and the crowd gave her a nice hand. A few people stood and cheered, but the fans around them told them to sit down. "She's not that kind of person," they said. "Cool it. Back off." The fans were trying to give her plenty of space. After the game, Guidry said, "I really have to respect her. She's got that small strike zone and she protects it well, so she makes you pitch to her." She said, "Guidry? Was that his name? I didn't know. Anyway, he didn't show me much. He throws funny, don't you think? He reminded me a little bit of a southpaw I saw down in Nicaragua, except she threw inside more."

All the writers were there, kneeling around her. One of them asked if Guidry had thrown her a lot of sliders.

She gave him a long, baleful look. "Jeez, you guys are out of shape," she said. "You're wheezing and panting and sucking air, and you just took the elevator *down* from the press box. You guys want to write about sports you ought to go into training. And then you ought to learn how to recognize a slider. Jeez, if you were writing about agriculture, would you have to ask someone if those were Holsteins?"

Tears came to the writer's eyes. "I'm trying to help," he said. "Can't you see that? Don't you know how much we care about you? Sometimes I think you put up this tough exterior to hide your own insecurity."

She laughed and brushed the wet hair back from her forehead. "It's no exterior," she said as she unbuttoned her jersey. "It's who I am." She peeled off her socks and stepped out of her cubicle a moment later, sweaty and stark naked. The towel hung from her hand. She walked slowly around them. "You guys learned all you know about women thirty years ago. That wasn't me back then, that was my mother." The writers bent over their notepads, writing down every word she said and punctuating carefully. Gentleman Jim took off his glasses. "My mother was a nice lady, but she couldn't hit the curve to save her Creamettes," she went on. "And now, gentlemen, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to take a shower." They pored over their notes until she was gone, and then they piled out into the hallway and hurried back to the press elevator.

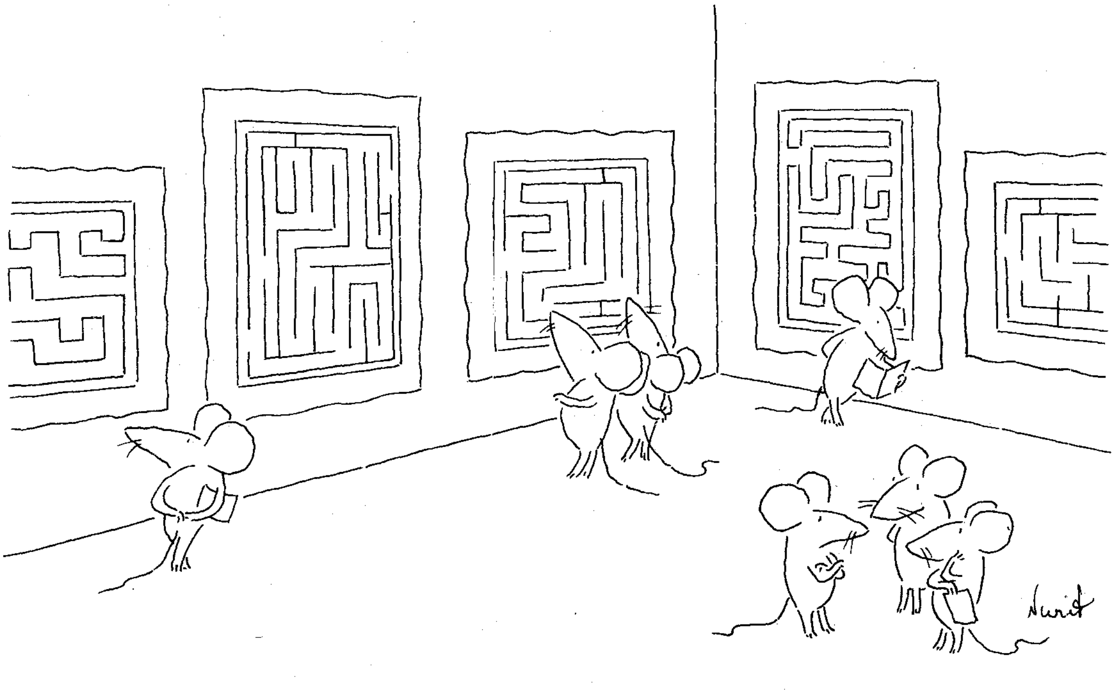
Arnie stopped at the Shortstop for a load of Martinis before he went to the office to write the "Hot Box," which turned out to be about love:

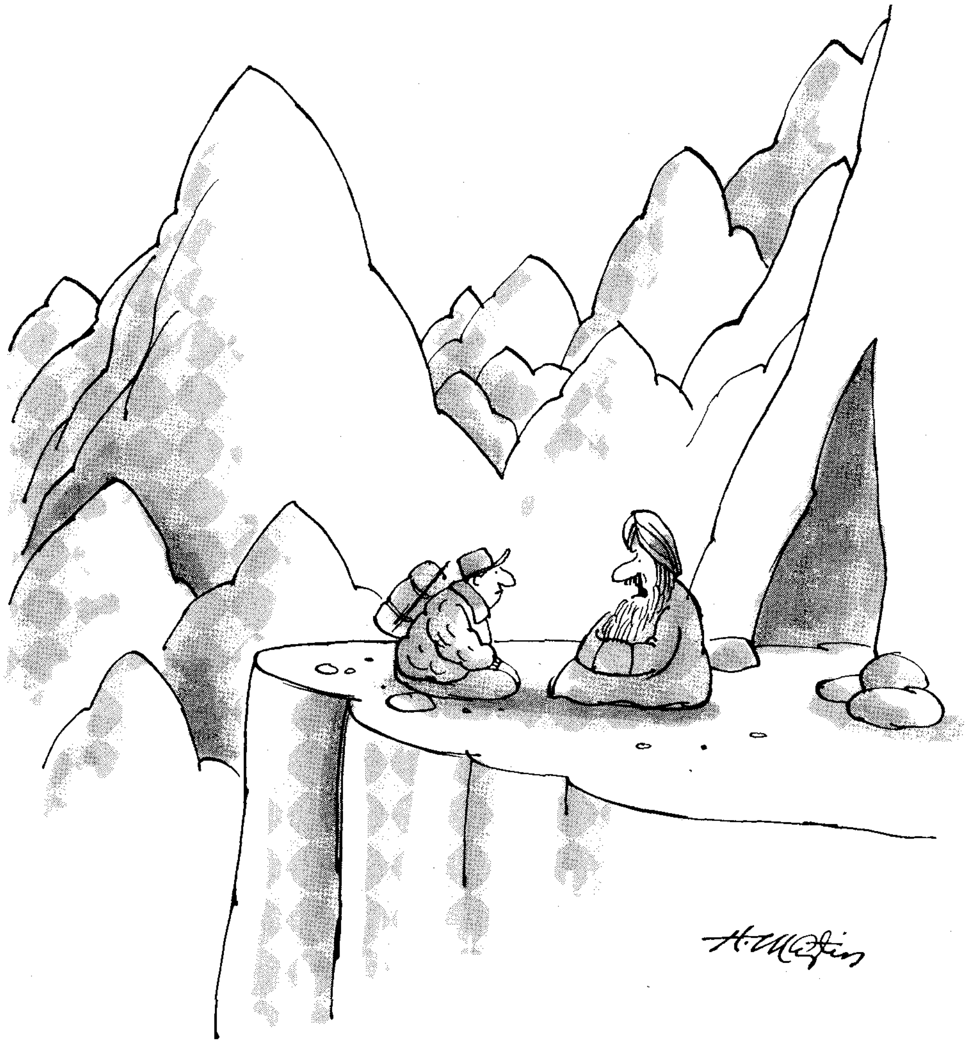
> Baseball is a game but it's more than a game, baseball is people, dammit, and if you are around people you can't help but get involved in their lives and care about them and then you don't know how to talk to them or tell them how much you care and how come we know so much about pitching and we don't know squat about how to communicate? I guess that is the question.

THE next afternoon, Arnie leaned against the batting cage before the game, hung over, and watched her hit line drives, fifteen straight, and each one made his head hurt. As she left the cage, he called over to her. "Later," she said. She also declined a pregame interview with Joe Garagiola, who had just told his NBC "Game of the Week" television audience, "This is a city in love with a little girl named Annie Szemanski," when he saw her in the dugout doing deep knee bends. "Annie! Annie!" he yelled over the air. "Let's see if we can't get her up here," he told the home audience. "Annie! Joe Garagiola!" She turned her back to him and went down into the dugout.

That afternoon, she became the first woman to steal two bases in one inning. She reached first on a base on balls, stole second, went to third on a sacrifice fly, and headed for home on the next pitch. The catcher came out to make the tag, she caught him with her elbow under the chin, and when the dust cleared she was grinning at the ump, the catcher was sprawled in the grass trying to inhale, and the ball was halfway to the backstop.

The TV camera zoomed in on her, head down, trotting toward the dugout steps, when suddenly she looked up. Some out-of-town fan had yelled at her from the box seats. ("A profanity which also refers to a female dog," the *News* said.) She smiled and, just before she stepped out of view be-





"I can't tell you the meaning of life, son, but I can tell you how to get India ink out of cotton chambray madras."

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neath the dugout roof, millions observed her right hand uplifted in a familiar gesture. In bars around the country, men looked at each other and said, "Did she do what I think I saw her do? She didn't do that, did she?" In the booth, Joe Garagiola was observing that it was a clean play, that the runner has a right to the base path, but when her hand appeared on the screen he stopped. At home, it sounded as if he had been hit in the chest by a rock. The screen went blank, then went to a beer commercial. When the show resumed, it was the middle of the next inning.

On Monday, for "actions detrimental to the best interests of baseball," Annie was fined a thousand dollars by the Commissioner and suspended for two games. He deeply regretted the decision, etc. "I count myself among her most ardent fans. She is good for baseball, good for the cause of equal rights, good for America." He said he would be happy to suspend the suspension if she would make a public apology, which would make him the happiest man in America.

Gentleman Jim went to the bank Monday afternoon and got the money, a thousand dollars, in a cashier's check. All afternoon, he called Annie's number over and over, waiting thirty and forty rings, then trying again. He called from a pay phone at the Stop 'N' Shop, next door to the Cityview Apartments, where she lived, and between calls he sat in his car and watched the entrance, waiting for her to come out. Other men were parked there, too, in front, and some in back—men with Sparrows bumper stickers. After midnight, about eleven of them were left. "Care to share some onion chips and clam dip?" one guy said to another guy. Pretty soon all of them were standing around the trunk of the clam-dip guy's car, where he also had a case of beer.

"Here, let me pay you something for this beer," said a guy who had brought a giant box of pretzels.

"Hey, no. Really. It's just good to have other guys to talk to tonight," said the clam-dip owner.

"She changed a lot of very basic things about the whole way that I look at myself as a man," the pretzel guy said quietly.

"I'm in public relations," said Jim, "but even I don't understand all that she has meant to people."

"How can she do this to us?" said a potato-chip man. "All the love of the fans, how can she throw it away? Why can't she just play ball?"

Annie didn't look at it that way. "Pall Mall! I'm not going to crawl just because some Tootsie Roll says crawl, and if they don't like it, then Ritz, they can go Pepsi their Hostess Twinkies," she told the writers as she cleaned out her locker on Tuesday morning. They had never seen the inside of her locker before. It was stuffed with dirty socks, half unwrapped gifts from admiring fans, a set of ankle weights, and a small silver-plated pistol. "No way I'm going to pay a thousand dollars, and if they expect an apology—well, they better send out for lunch, because it's going to be a long wait. Gentlemen, goodbye and hang on to your valuable coupons." And she smiled her most winning smile and sprinted up the stairs to collect her paycheck. They waited for her outside the Sparrows office, twenty-six men, and then followed her down the ramp and out of Gate C. She broke into a run and disappeared into the lunchtime crowd on West Providence Avenue, and that was the last they saw of her—the woman of their dreams, the love of their lives, carrying a red gym bag, running easily away from them. —GARRISON KEILLOR

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BLOCK THAT METAPHOR!

[*From Car and Driver Buyers Guide 1985*]

Oldsmobile's version of the General Motors J-car was phased into the lineup in the spring of 1982, but a minor hole was left in the defenses. Unlike its brothers in arms, Oldsmobile had no wagon to plug into the dike. Now that this has been rectified, the bulwarks are tolerably tight again, never mind the stiffness of the competition.

THE FENCE PARTY

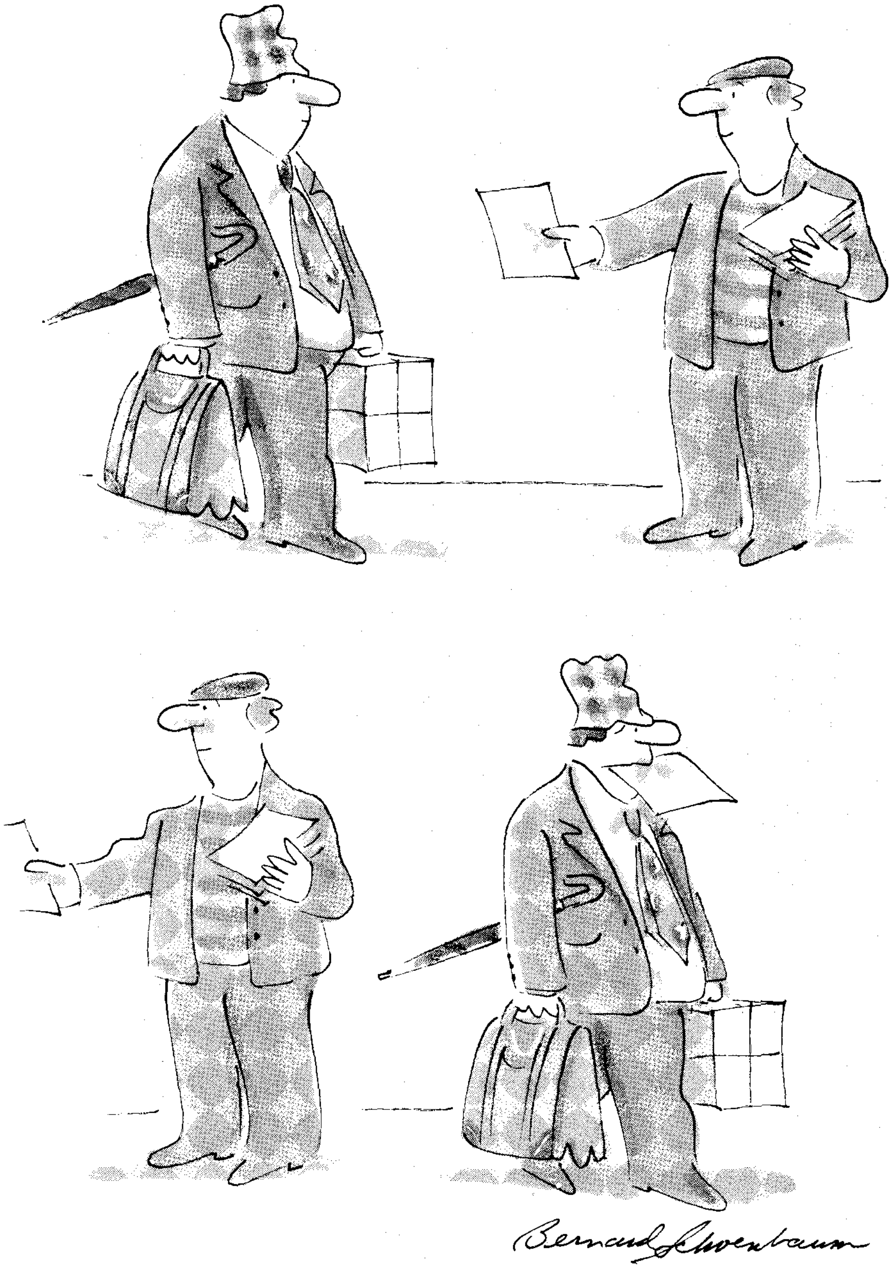
WITH the sound of the river forcing him to lift his voice and pitch it for her ears, Hart is holding forth to a woman with doctored auburn hair on the eccentricities of his father-in-law, a Nicaraguan refugee. She inclines her head—an angle that mimics, and in a shady way pretends to predict, intimacy. She has such a small, guarded face, crowned with the absurd hair, that he wants her to come closer. As a subject, fathers-in-law are a little poignant: Hart knows that this woman has had at least two. Acknowledging his own father-in-law proves that Hart is a family man. He likes to establish that at once, and let his amused account, falling into the gentlest irritation, suggest that he might be a slightly disappointed family man. That is the second thing Hart likes to make known. He likes to present the fact and the subtle hint of its contradiction together, a knot.

All afternoon, from a distance, Hart followed the auburn head among his guests, who had been invited to mend the old fence on the steep slope above the house. He watched her swinging a hammer, riding forward on its strokes with a carpenter's grace, her tanned, barefoot daughter handing her tenpenny nails, and fell in love. The party is a reward for the fence's menders, and a housewarming as well, because Hart and his second wife, Caro, bought the house last winter, less than a month after they were married. He is lucky in the weather, as he knew he would be. Only last week, the evenings would have been too cold for people to stand around drinking on the lawn. But not tonight, not when everyone feels flushed and high with work. Tonight could almost be summer.

Hart puts his hand on the woman's arm, then knows that was a mistake, and pretends, working thumb and forefinger, to rub out a mosquito. He does voices well, and has caught the Nicaraguan lilt exactly, more exactly than the auburn head can take in. Hart's brother-in-law works in a windowless Washington cubicle, finding jobs for immigrants, and once Hart tricked him, long distance, into believing that he was a desperate, but definitely Nicaraguan, refugee. It was too bad he did that, because Caro found out. She interpreted it to mean that he didn't believe in the serious nature of her brother's work; that he took the entire Dominguez family far too lightly; that she should pack and go before she was ever so shamed in her family's eyes again. If she happened to overhear him now, she would know exactly what he was up to. Hart glances over his shoulder. Caro is standing on the reedy bank, out of earshot, stripping a willow twig and letting the leaves wing down into the current, fast with snowmelt. Beside her, an elderly guest in baggy trousers scans the river for teal with Caro's small binoculars; Caro must have told him what to search for. It's a good thing that in bird-watching Caro has found something she likes. Hart hadn't known how she would handle the solitude of the house in the gorge. He teaches mathematics three days a week, fifty miles each way, and those nights it's easiest for him to sleep on the couch in his office. But in the intense, close Dominguez clan of brothers, sisters, godparents, and cousins, no one is ever by himself, and at first Caro had been frightened of the house's remoteness—of the way that up and down the canyon at night there were no lights that were not stars. Lately, though, Hart has almost ceased to worry about her. Last month when the river began to rise, she spent the days dragging and stacking sandbags into a wall that now protects the house, tapering away along the lawn's undercut, somewhat treacherous bank. Because they were meant to hold wheat for famine relief, the hundreds of dun sandbags had "Donated by the People of the U.S.A." printed on them, and, for longshoremen, "USE NO HOOKS." Caro had even been in the paper—a grainy, dramatic photograph of a young woman, her arms streaked with mud, fortifying her house against the rising Chama.

No one knows how badly Hart wanted this house on the river. Not Caro, and not Kevin, Hart's fifteen-year-old son, who reads his father's emotions with uncanny and troubling accuracy. But Caro and Kevin would never have suspected Hart of such single-mindedness, though in fact he was intent on having the house as soon as he saw it, from the intaglio Moorish cross on the granite threshold,

Time to Feed the Cat



through each of the quiet, cobwebbed rooms, to the chicken coop on the slope. He felt a sharp nostalgia when the door rocked open at the real estate agent's prodding to reveal the downy floor of the abandoned coop, with rays of light smoking in between the warped pine planks. Silent with covetousness, back in the shadowy living room, Hart let the agent run through her pitch, but nothing she said mattered to him. He was already sold.

To his surprise, Caro was game. She adapted. Slugging leaden sandbags into place, she had had lots of time to feel furious regret at being tied to an old house in danger of washing away, but she'd been uncomplaining, even stoic. She deserves her picture in the paper; yes, she does.

While he deserves this guest, and with a flirting dance step he moves a little nearer. Her daughter looks something like her, only new-minted. The daughter's hair must be the original, brushed away from the brown forehead and falling down her back in a long mare's-tail mass, the kind of hair that would snap when brushed, and has a glossy warmth that the mother, twice divorced, still tries for. This is the girl that his son has been courting all afternoon with an awkwardness that makes Hart catch his breath, he recalls so much when he sees it. Kevin pursued the girl across the lawn, along the cobbled-together fence, which they pretended to inspect, and up the river into the cottonwoods. Watching them go, Hart felt all of his amused detachment from Kevin vanish. He has Kevin all summer, but throughout the school year Kevin lives with his mother, and Hart wishes he could keep him longer, for some of the changes in Kevin are disturbing—a kind of vague depression, yet a cockiness, a screwed-up *some*thing. Kevin carries a Skoal can in a back pocket of his Levi's, where it has worn a little halo of lightness in the denim; Hart wonders whether there is really chewing tobacco in the can. When he talks to Kevin now, he feels Kevin's attention shy away, glance back, and swing toward opposition. Recently, Kevin informed Hart that he wanted to change his name to Cisco. Caro laughed, and adopted it at once. That is pure Caro—to turn against Hart in a way that seems to ally her with Kevin but actually doesn't have Kevin's best interests at heart at all. Hart has been critical of her: she doesn't lift a finger to interrupt the wary arguments.

"We're not used to each other," Caro said. "I can't be strict with him, Hart. It makes me feel like an idiot. Discipline, that's your business, if you want to act that way with him. From me he can count on empathy. That's how it is in my family—the men for strictness, the women for empathy. Who needs it more than a fifteen-year-old kid with this strange imported stepmother?"

"It's not empathy if you just give without thinking what's good," Hart said.

"I don't understand why even little things about Kevin drive you crazy. He doesn't *do* anything wrong, Hart. He even remembers your birthday." That was so: there, on the living-room wall, was the painting Kevin did when his father turned forty-three, of a tall, Kevin-like punk-rocker in a funereal black suit, with skinny legs, bronze hair, and pointy sunglasses. "See, Kev has a sense of humor about himself. About you, too."

"If you're my wife, you have to begin to act like his mother," Hart snapped. For which he got what he had expected, a long Caro stare.

Now Caro works her way through the party: an instinctive hostess, she clearly adores each guest. After all, these friends had turned up when needed, to help mend the fence; they have the rare sensation of feeling that they are people who can be counted on. Caro tends that mood, carrying a bottle of Spanish champagne to some stragglers, flushing a little laughter from them. Hart feels a sudden, cherishing regard for his wife. What more can he ask for?

The answer to that is standing beside him, and he keeps talking.

"See, Spanish is so strange that a vital insult can sometimes be an endearment. Like '*cabrón*'—a very bad word that means 'he-goat.' That can be mortal. But my father-in-law, he calls me *cabrito*."

"Little goat," the auburn-haired guest says.

"Except when he calls me *chico*. *Chico* this, *chico* that, because '*chico*' is basically an all-purpose word, a pleasant way of ending sentences."

"My daughter had a boyfriend who called her *chica*. I was kind of worried about that. That went on for a while."

"Worried because he was Spanish?"

"And for other reasons." She touches a diamond earring. "They broke up and she just, she just didn't handle it too well. But I think he was mean to her."

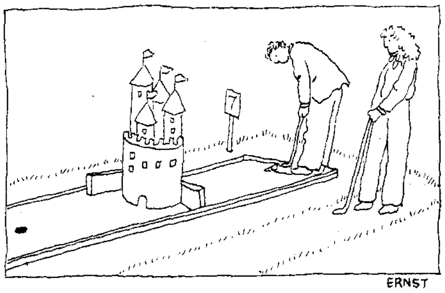
He is losing her attention somehow. "How was he mean?"

"In little ways. You know." She turns. "Hart, *look*. In the water." But he's gazing at her, and she does a curious thing: she takes his chin and faces his eyes at the river. On the dark surface, not thirty feet out, there is a floating scrap he slowly recognizes as a forehead. The forehead of a stricken face, a woman's, and then a second face, a man's, turning in slow motion to stare at the party on the lawn. An overturned canoe bucks below their arms, and seems to grind against them. Hart is sure he sees the woman flinch. Her thin arms rest on the canoe's underside, which threatens to throw her off. Hart thinks, She wishes she could just lay her head down and go to sleep, turning her cheek to the slick wood and holding on until she lets go. He thinks, She could die. She is just so tired she could die. Behind him, a guest calls out, "Can't you swim?" The sound carries across the water.

The man's face, with its drenched hair, lifts, and he calls back, "No."

Hart doesn't feel as frightened for him as for the woman. He hands his wineglass to the auburn-haired guest, who says, "Go on. *Go!*"

On the torn bank, with the familiar muck squishing under his sneakers and a tier of submerged sandbags before him, Hart tries to guess the best way of diving in among the sharp underwater boulders, fallen long ago from the gorge's walls. He knows what the boulders look like near the bank, because except when the river is this high they're exposed. There is a conversation going on between the canoe, still upriver, and the lawn, but Hart can't make it out. The man in the water seems to have awakened, and is doing all the talking for the couple.



Hart can see the woman's glistening head, her cheek turned to the russet wood now. She seems light. The man begins to resist, according to the instructions of one of the guests on the lawn, who is calling, "Bring it around! Bring it around!," trying to brake the canoe's speed by kicking against it. The canoe wobbles, and the woman looks up, scared to death.

Then, with a father's alertness to the shape of his son, Hart sees a half-naked Kevin launch himself from a steep boulder so surely that his pale back, flat over the water, branches with muscle, and his extended arms sweep forward, hiding his face. The river takes him with slapped-up light. An amazing shock—not a stillness but a live shock—startles Hart's chest. Kevin went in thirty feet upstream from the canted canoe. Hart forgets the rocks and dives. His body knows

DANCING WITH POETS

"The accident" is what he calls the time
he threw himself from a window four floors up,
breaking his back and both ankles so that walking
became the direst labor for this man
who takes my hand, invites me to the empty strip of floor
that fronts the instruments, a length of polished wood
the shape of a grave. *Unsuited for this world—*
his body bears the marks of it, his hand
is tense with effort and with shame, and I shy away
from any audience, but I love to dance, and soon
we find a way to move, drifting apart as each
effects a different ripple across the floor,
a plaid and a stripe to match the solid navy of the band.
And suddenly the band is getting better, so pleased
to have this pair of dancers, since we make visible
the music in the noise—and the dull pulse
leaps with unexpected riffs and turns, we can hear
how good the keyboard really is, the bright cresting
of another major key as others join us: a strict block
of a man, a formidable cliff of mind, dancing as if melted,
as if unhinged; his partner a gift of brave elegance
to those who watch her dance; and at her elbow
Berryman back from the bridge, and Frost relieved
of grievances, Dickinson waltzing there with lavish Keats,
who coughs into a borrowed handkerchief—all the poets of exile
and despair, unfit for this life, all those who cannot speak
but only sing, all those who cannot walk
who strut and spin until the waiting citizens at the bar,
aloof, judgmental, begin to sway or drum their straws
or hum, leave their seats to crowd the narrow floor,
and now we are one body, sweating and foolish,
one body with its clear pathetic grace, not
lifted out of grief but dancing it, transforming
for one night this local bar, before we're turned back out
to our separate selves, to the dangerous streets and houses,
to the overwhelming drone of the living world.

—Ellen Bryant Voigt

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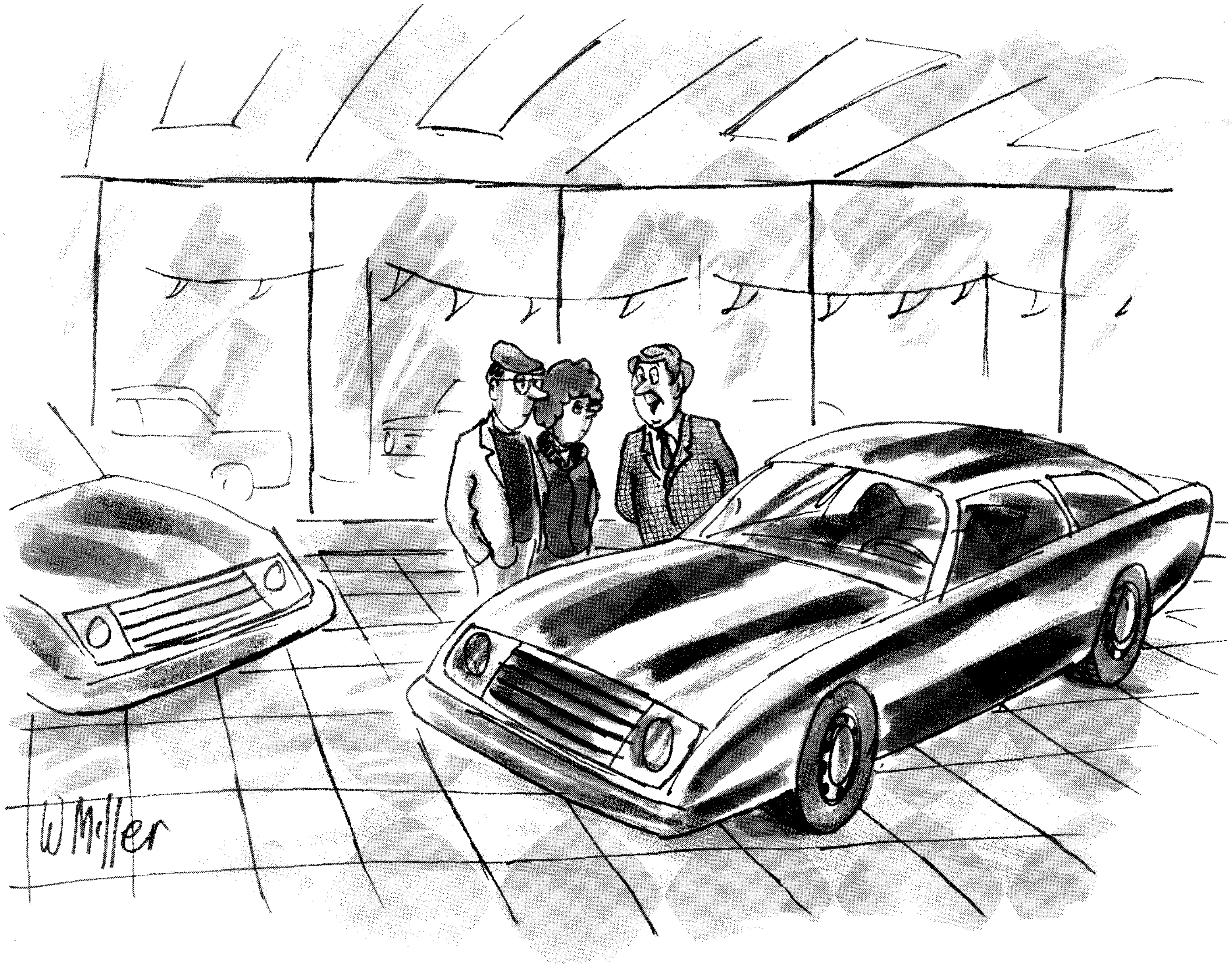


"An enormous amount of advanced engineering has gone into our latest models. That's not to say, of course, that an enormous amount of advanced engineering hasn't always gone into all our models."

• •

that it wasn't a good dive, and his outstretched hands pat down the plush side of an old boulder that looms up too near his forehead. There is a dappled, thinnish radiance that is the river's surface; below that, everything is a thousand shades of brown. Hart strokes strongly through the moving cold. A small voice in the back of his skull is calling, *Kevin Kevin Kevin.* Another, rational voice is reasoning that Kevin is safe. Desperate to breathe, Hart feels the mistakes his son could make. Hart remembers, from long ago, his son's impossibly clumsy adoration of the girl. He's a child, and the water is so strong. Hart strains to believe what he knows—that Kevin isn't safe, that he is somewhere in the river. Hart pushes himself against the current, and when he comes up, a window shatters. He shakes his head harshly, flinging water from his eyes, sucking air. A kind of gold-shot dusk from the river is over everything. His gut is all springy and young with panic, and he feels very strange. He turns around in a circle. There is no canoe.

There is no Kevin. A voice calls gravely, *Kev Kev Kev.* The wall of the gorge tilts very slowly—slowly but definitely, it rocks forward and back. Hart knows that the gorge's wall is eternal, but he saw it tilt. That dazzle in the corner of his eye is the river wrinkling around reeds. The bitterness in his mouth is the licked-clamshell taste of river water. On a gust of adrenaline, he kicks himself through another complete, more careful circle, because logic dictates that the canoe is either before him or behind him, and that he has missed it. There are some guests on the bank, still holding their glasses. The violence of his emotions buoys him up, but he is sliding rapidly downstream, away from the party.

With a rush of relief, he finds the canoe—and Kevin towing it in to the bank, almost home. The man and the woman are still clinging to the canoe, not helping. Hart hopes they're at least not hurting. Kevin's face has the awed look of profound exertion. He catches a firm hold near the bank, hooking an elbow around a willow trunk and snugging himself in, out of the full force of the current, drawing the canoe after him only when he's safe, and there. *Good boy,* Hart thinks. The man, then the woman begin to push themselves up thinly, having got their footing. Neither of them helps Kevin with the canoe, but someone on the bank is thinking and comes down to steady it while Kevin shoves. Then several other guests stride down, and there is a kind of quaint, choreographed struggle to draw the canoeists and canoe from the water. Kevin lurches shyly out, six feet of bare-backed, bright-white boy, and Hart could sing.

He treads through another cold circle, for joy. The shadows of the cottonwoods, thrown across the river's bronze-brown, are almost touching him now. His wet head draws a haze of gnats, so close that when he blinks several are caught in his eyelashes. He dives and strokes in the direction of the lawn. When he surfaces again, he knows Kevin is looking for him among the partygoers and, not finding him there, is frightened that his father hadn't—somehow hadn't—seen the rescue. When Kevin faces the water, Hart is already wading up through the muck below the bank he dived from. His left foot is bare; between his toes, the mud is slick. Hart hugs himself and slaps his rib cage on either side.

He climbs the stepped sandbags, then labors up the bank, patting the canoe as he passes it. He knows that the canoeists will be shepherded through the party to Caro, and that she will be very good at comforting them, and that there will be a story in it to be relayed from Dominguez to Dominguez across North America. Exultant, Hart moves through what's left of the party. The nearly drowned look awkward, like absurdly late guests. He appraises them. They're not people he'd have asked.

The man rather delicately cracks a can of Dos Equis, and is forced to laugh at himself for the sheer ordinariness of the thing he has just done. He has opened a beer. He could have drowned.

Caro brings brandy for the woman, who is already feathering her spiky hair away from her face, life and vanity returning, though there are exhausted smudges under her eyes. Hart wants her to look at him, and she does. He guesses she feels a lot of things: embarrassment, pleasure in recognizing him, gratitude, anxious relief, and shock—still, prominently, shock, with shock's cold simplicity. He remembers her cheek laid against the rocking wood. He feels too close to her to try to talk to her. Caro seems to be teaching her how to drink. The woman drinks the brandy in slow, breathy sips.

Hart sees the auburn-haired guest from the corner of his eye, and she gives him a big melancholy grin and swoons backward into the arms of a tennis pro, who catches her neatly. The near-drowning has brought out a rising hilarity in the guests. They are cautious about intruding on the canoeists, yet no one looks away from them, either. The canoeists are so wet they might as well be naked, but it's a charmed, neutral nakedness: no one could make them feel it. No one wishes to be very far from them. They're a little magic.

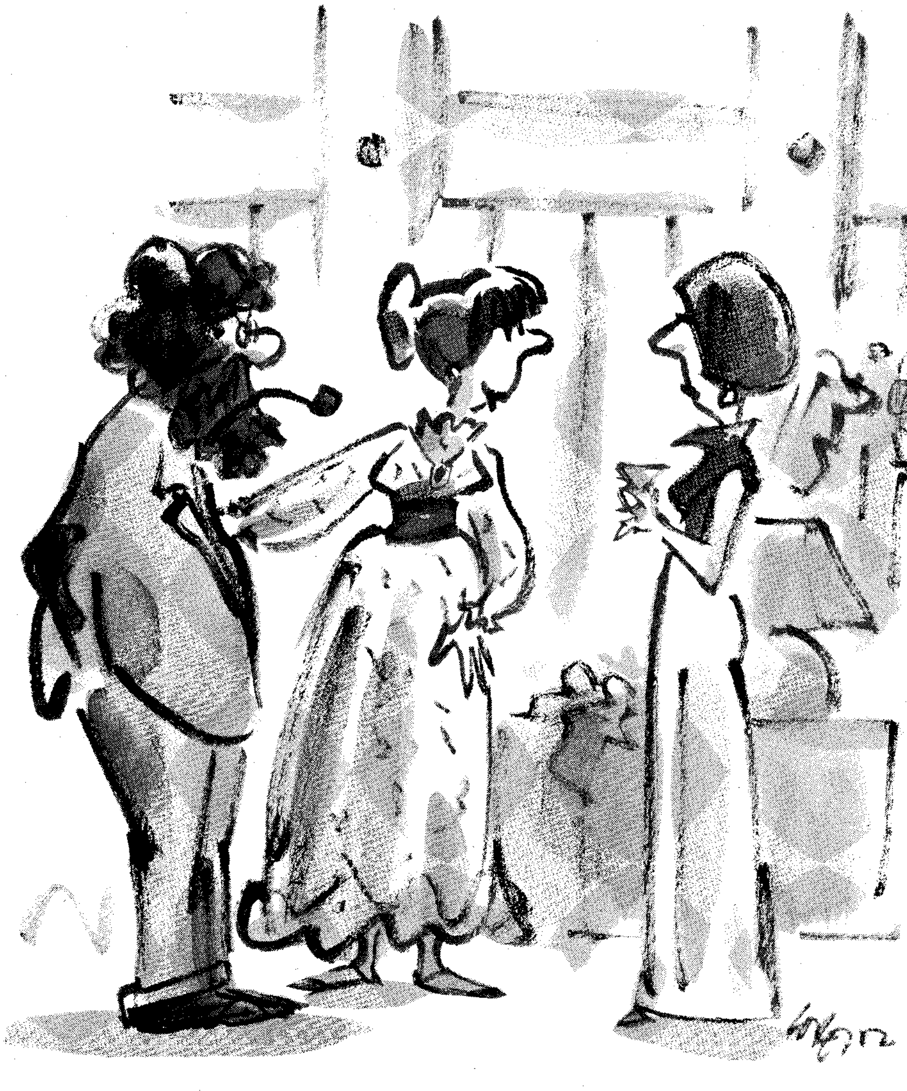
Just before the banalities begin, the harmless things everyone is going to feel compelled to say, Caro catches up with Hart and says softly, "Just because *I* had *my* picture in the paper," and pounds her fist gently against his slick chest. She picks the sodden T-shirt away from his skin, but it sticks again, and she kisses his chest through it, whispering, "O.K., you're a hero now. A hero. Was it worth it?"

He's not a hero. He's abashed, and somehow banished from grace, like all of the others who didn't go in. Twenty feet away, in a clearing among the guests, Kevin is lying on his back in the grass, the wet jeans gleaming on his long legs. The girl kneeling beside him is drying his face with her skirt.

Hart can taste it, himself saying to his son, "Jesus, Kev, I thought I'd lost you."

Caro hits him. "Oh, no, you don't," she says. "You just leave them alone."

—ELIZABETH TALLENT



"*David is just back from Italy—with his rage intact.*"

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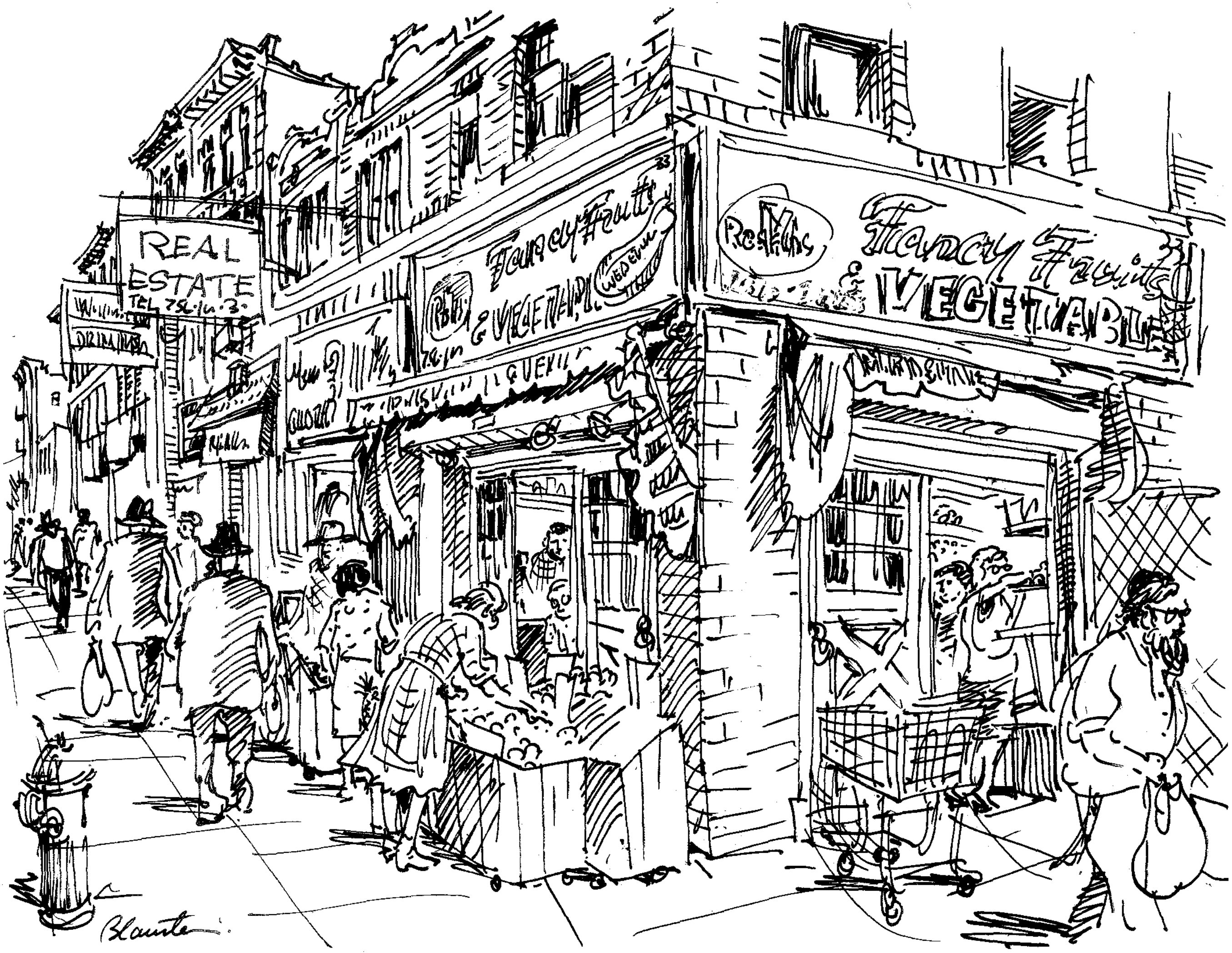
HOW'S THAT AGAIN? DEPARTMENT

[*Photo caption in the Boston Herald*]

Burrell King of Deland, Fla., holds Freddie, a toad he and his wife found in a chicken yard near their home. It is almost 18 inches nose to nose and is believed to be a Bufo Marinus, which is native to South America.

A REPORTER AT LARGE

HOLY DAYS—I



IN the small hours of a cold fall morning, when most of New York City was asleep, some five thousand bearded, dark-hatted men, wearing nearly identical dark suits and coats, danced around a decrepit synagogue in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, their arms about one another's shoulders. The synagogue, a converted prewar apartment house, stood on the corner of Kingston Avenue and Eastern Parkway, a major thoroughfare, and the curious slowed their cars down as they drove past this strange spectacle. Some drivers lowered their windows and caught a few snatches of the songs the men were singing, but few of them could make out any of the words, which were Hebrew; some of the songs were just wordless melodies.

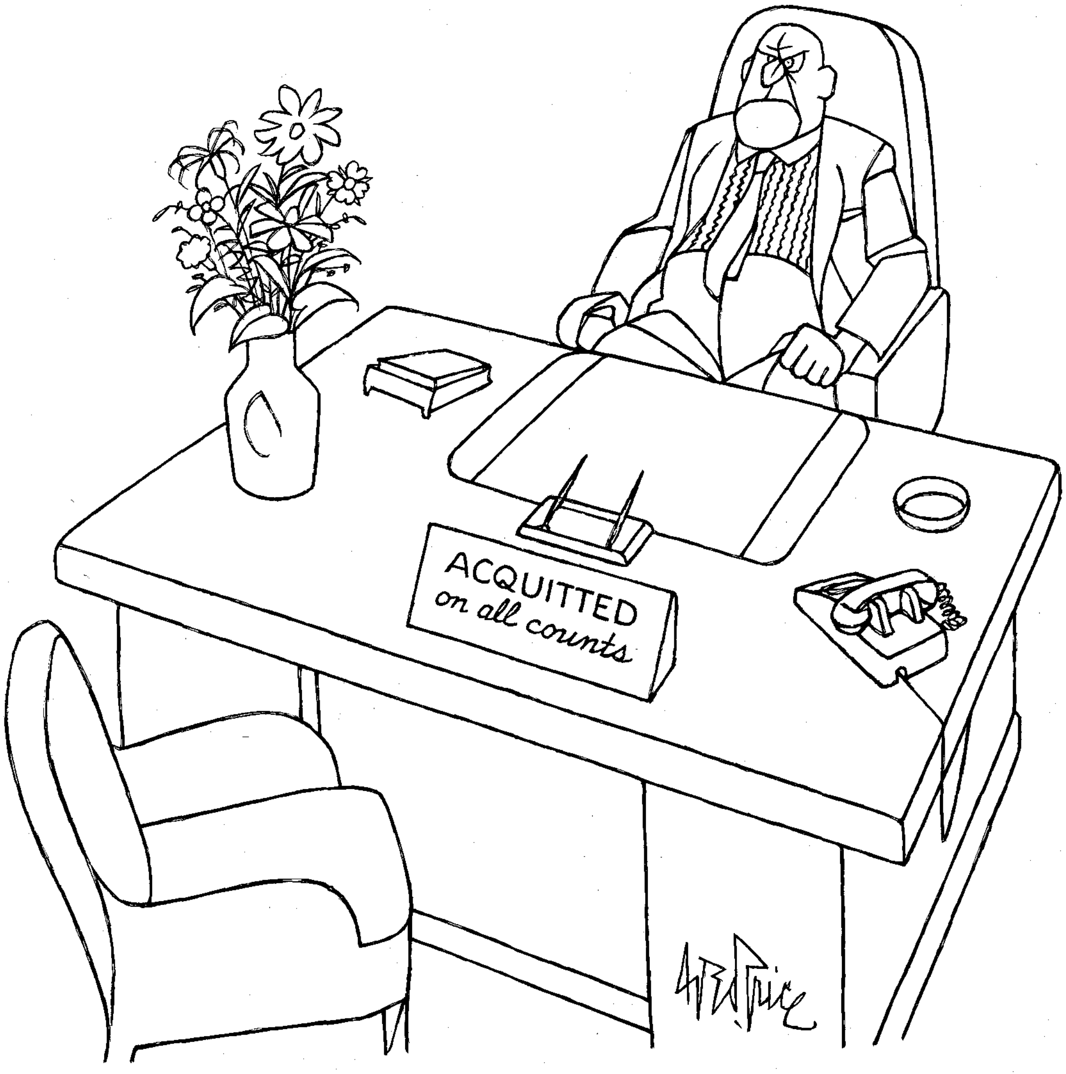
The men were Lubavitcher Hasidim, and they were celebrating the Jewish holiday called Simchat Torah (Rejoicing of the Torah), a day when the final portion of the year's reading of the Torah is completed, the scrolls of the Torah are carried around the synagogue seven times, and the Hasidic community expresses its gratitude for being intimately connected with the Torah in spirited singing, dancing, and merrymaking, which frequently last all night. A smaller but still substantial number of Hasidic women hovered along the edge of the sidewalk, smiling but not dancing. I had come to witness this annual event with two friends, a man and a woman. Apart from the motorists, we were the only spectators. The man, a Gentile, was enjoying himself. The graceful, scholarly-looking old men, bright-eyed little boys with long sidelocks, plump, dishevelled householders, and pale, bespectacled students were as exotic to him as any Fiji islanders, and he spoke admiringly of the virility of the dancing and the religious fervor of the dancers. The woman, a secular Jew, was not enjoying herself. She thought that the celebrating she saw was inspired by vodka, not religion, and she regarded the separation between the men and the women as symbolic of the group's backwardness. My own feelings about them oscillated between neutral and familial. A secular Jew myself, I had nevertheless felt for years that the Hasidim were a mystery I wanted to fathom.

In a box of old photographs that my family kept, I had once, long ago, found a picture of a fierce-looking bearded old man wearing the sort of broad-brimmed fur hat and long black coat that Hasidic men wear. When I asked my mother, a Manhattan-bred lawyer, who he was, she peered at the photograph briefly and disapprovingly, shrugged, and said, "Nobody in our family." Indeed, the man stood out so remarkably from the waistcoated shopkeepers, the placid artisans and small businessmen, and the tightly corseted women who populated the box that he seemed to have fallen in by mistake. But she may have been wrong. Our progenitors came from Austria, Rumania, and Russia, and in the nineteenth century three-quarters of the Jewish population of Eastern Europe was Hasidic. It was more than likely, therefore, that that man, or somebody like him, not only was "in" our family but was a central figure in the families of the majority of American Jews, most of whom can trace their lineage back to Eastern Europe. Believing that the Hasidim represented some antique version of myself, I had always felt vaguely bound to them and curious to know who they actually were—a curiosity that neither my education nor my social milieu nor my reading of Hasidic stories did much to satisfy. The outing to Crown Heights with my friends was one of many tentative forays I made to the gates of the Hasidic world over a number of years, until one day I decided to see if I could breach them and find out what was on the other side. I hoped to find a Hasidic family that would allow me a privileged look behind its door.

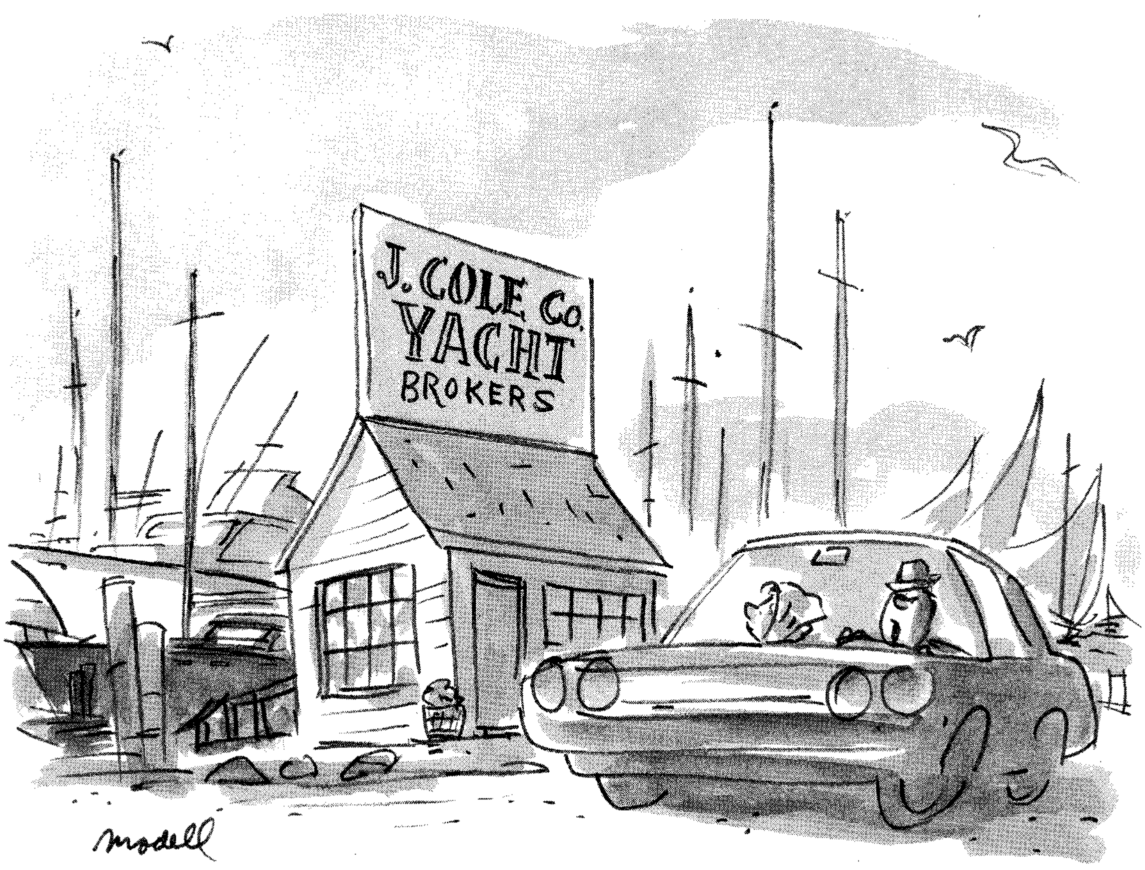
Hasidism is a revivalist-pietistic movement that began in Poland in the first half of the eighteenth century. Its innovativeness lay in the way it redefined traditional Jewish values by placing prayer, mysticism, dancing, singing, storytelling, and the sanctification of daily life on an equal footing with Talmudic scholarship. (Talmud is the name given to the oral law of the Jews and the commentaries on it written by Palestinian and Babylonian scholars from the third through the fifth centuries A.D.) The movement has always been centered on its leaders, and the leaders—men noted as much for charisma as for piety and scholarliness—have traditionally passed their leadership on from generation to generation, in dynastic fashion. The various Hasidic groups, or courts, that developed over the years were named after places in Europe that were the seats of these dynasties or the birthplace of their founders. The Belzers came from Belz, the Bobovers from Bobov (both Galician towns), and so on. There is even a homegrown American group, of fairly recent vintage, called the Bostoner Hasidim, whose leader holds court in the Boston suburb of Brookline.

It has been estimated that there are some two hundred and fifty thousand Hasidim in the world today—about one-fifth the number at the turn of the century. Close to two hundred thousand live in the United States, and about half of those live in Brooklyn. The Lubavitchers, whose name comes from the Belorussian city that was the seat of their dynasty for many years, are believed to be the largest group worldwide. (No official census exists.) They are one of forty Hasidic courts that survived the Russian pogroms and the Holocaust—although many of these survived only marginally. Before the Second World War, there were about fifty courts. The Satmarers, who live in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, claim the largest New York following—forty-five thousand. Originally from Hungary, they emerged from the war in greater numbers, because the war did not come to their country until 1944. Most of the other groups—among them the Gerers, the Bobovers, and the Belzers—live in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn; there are about thirty-five thousand Hasidim there. Smaller numbers live in Westchester and Rockland Counties and in New Jersey. The groups are more alike than unalike, but differences, and even deep enmities, have developed between some of them.

Despite the large Hasidic presence in and around the city, finding a family who would allow me into their lives proved to be no simple task. Most Hasidim are suspicious of outsiders, distrustful of the printed word, and tired of being depicted as cute but anachronistic, like the Pygmies, or—worse—as cultists.



After I had spent months in pleasant but fruitless exchanges with members of some of the smaller groups, an acquaintance with ties to the Hasidic world suggested that I try the Lubavitchers. The Lubavitchers, who are familiar to most New Yorkers because of the aggressive sidewalk proselytizing campaign their yeshiva students conduct beside large white campers, have traditionally been more open to outsiders than other Hasidim are. A Lubavitcher spokesman gave me the names of two families to try. Neither was interested in being interviewed, but word of my quest spread rapidly along the Lubavitcher grapevine, and before long someone gave me the telephone number of Moshe and Sheina Konigsberg (their names and certain identity-revealing details of their lives have been changed), a couple who lived in Crown Heights. Mrs. Konigsberg, whose firmly accented "r"s and flat "a"s betrayed origins more westerly than Brooklyn, told me when I called that she and her husband rarely liked the articles they read about Hasidim outside the Jewish press but that it might be useful to other Jews for the picture that people had of Hasidic life to be clarified. After a brief family conference, the Konigsbergs agreed to talk with me as much as I liked, and invited me to pay them a visit that week.



"*Thank goodness I don't have to have a* yacht *broker.*"

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Crown Heights, where most of the city's fifteen thousand Lubavitcher Hasidim live, is a tidy, quiet oasis surrounded by streets that have succumbed to decay and abandonment. For the ultra-Orthodox, mostly Eastern European Jews who live there, the kosher butcher shops and restaurants, the religious schools and bookstores, the ritual bathhouses and scrupulously observed religious life are taken as much for granted as they would have been in any nineteenth-century shtetl. But to outsiders—even, or perhaps especially, to Jews who live in the ordinary world—it is a place shrouded in mystery. According to the city, the borders of the neighborhood are Atlantic Avenue to the north; Clarkson Avenue to the south; Ralph, East New York, and Utica Avenues to the east; and Flatbush and Ocean Avenues to the west. But the Lubavitchers' Crown Heights is actually a far smaller area, whose borders are loosely defined by their synagogue and schools, the kosher shops, and the last Hasidic family on a block. The majority of the residents of Crown Heights are black, but it is the Hasidim, perhaps because of their old-fashioned clothes and their high visibility when they gather in front of their synagogue, who dominate the landscape. In the postwar years, Crown Heights was predominantly Jewish, but with the arrival of large numbers of blacks and Puerto Ricans in the late fifties and the sixties most of the Jewish population departed. Those who wanted to live in an exclusively Jewish neighborhood moved to Borough Park; the more upwardly mobile moved to the suburbs. The Lubavitchers stayed.

On my first daytime visit to the neighborhood, I felt as if I had wandered into a dream. Pale, bearded, black-hatted, dark-suited men, looking remarkably alike, hurried along the sidewalks with downcast eyes, pointedly avoiding eye contact with civilians. Those who chanced to look up stared stonily into space, like figures in a Magritte painting. The women were for the most part fashionably clad and coiffed, and looked like the men's richer relatives. Every female under forty-five appeared to be pregnant. Nineteen- and twenty-year-old mothers who looked no more grown-up than my young son's babysitters pushed a seemingly endless parade of carriages and strollers along the sidewalks, and high-spirited children hopped like rabbits everywhere. That day, the community was celebrating Purim—the festival that commemorates the Biblical Queen Esther and her deliverance of the Jews from a murderous plot of Haman, Persia's grand vizier—and many of the children wore masks and colorful costumes. Giggling, mustachioed

Hamans and gaudily crowned Esthers chased each other up and down the streets, their small bodies and masked faces adding a slightly madcap element to the dreamlike aura of the scene.

The Konigsbergs lived on President Street, a beautiful tree-lined avenue of large, old-fashioned, architecturally diverse houses which would not look out of place in a New England town. In the nineteen-forties, one section of President Street housed so many of Brooklyn's doctors that it became known as Doctors' Row. Now the street's residents are chiefly well-heeled Lubavitcher Hasidim or blacks, but its appearance has changed little in the last forty years. The Konigsbergs' house was a three-story red brick structure with Italianate masonry trim, built in the solid, generous style of the early nineteen-hundreds. It boasted a small garden, planted with rhododendrons and privet, that looked neat but unloved. The shades behind the front windows were down. Walking along, I'd noticed that many of the houses in the neighborhood had their blinds closed, their curtains drawn, their shutters latched.

Sheina Konigsberg greeted me warmly, and there was a long moment of mutual sizing up. Whatever stereotype of Hasidic women I might have had in my mind, Sheina did not fit it. She is an attractive, well-dressed, generously proportioned woman in her late forties who looks as if she could once have been a high-school cheerleader. As I contemplated her short, remarkably burnished-looking red curls and her general air of wholesomeness, two limpid, trusting blue eyes gazed at me with interest from behind oversized tortoiseshell glasses. Like many of Sheina's neighbors, I was pregnant at the time, and I had the distinct impression that the pregnancy not only conferred a welcome air of harmlessness upon me but earned me some unspoken *laissez-passer*.

"Hello. Come in. You're a little early. Moshe's not due back from prison for a while," she said, enjoying the shock effect of her words before adding, with a smile, "He goes to a penitentiary in New Jersey on some holidays, to lead the Jewish prisoners in services. If he didn't, they might not have any."

The house that Sheina showed me into was bright, cheerful, immaculately clean, and suburban-looking. The parlor floor had been turned into a spacious open room with hexagonal tiles on the floor; its walls were papered with a geometric print of orange and blue squares, and there were colorful paintings everywhere. A quilted velvet couch, two chairs, and a coffee table stood near a fireplace. There was a piano, bookshelves filled with books bearing mostly Hebrew titles, and a potted palm. Somehow, the furnishings, though obviously chosen with care, seemed like afterthoughts. The room had a public air about it, as if it were more a meeting hall than a living room—more a place where people might throng or pass through than somewhere to migrate to with a book and an apple. At the far end of the room was a bright-yellow modern kitchen, so orderly-looking that I would not have been surprised to find

THE NEW WORLD

There is news from my friend—
she is willing her own remission.
She's driving West to begin to live again,
while the incisions made to remove her scars
are still healing, her dressings
to be changed in emergency rooms along the way.
Tonight in this terminal all flights are delayed.
So many children are waiting
who must be flying, this August, from mother
to father. Just an hour ago,
my own son and I idled at the exit
by the interstate restaurant as the Midwest sun
went down until his father came.
Then we moved his small happinesses—
a few toys, new clothes in a travel bag—
from one car to the other.
It seems courage is lack of alternatives.
It seems a long life can be as tragic as watching
their tail-lights join slowly the eastbound traffic,
while in one great sweep the whole country
went dark and the lights came on and home
became sleep, maybe, or reruns on TV,
or the place in the mind where a song continues,
snatched from a passing car. Maybe it's true
that the back of this airline ticket charts the new world.
On its map we're stitched together more efficiently
than ever now that we've learned to fly,
to maneuver this endless parabola eclipsing the sky
and the ragged Missouri and the long yawn of Interstate 70.
We should let go of each other more easily,
say goodbye without fear, the heart's birthmark.
The air is alive with our failure.
Now these children here are somehow mine,
and I offer them, to help the time pass before boarding,
the Match Box cars I carry in my purse,
and which they push, with great understanding,
over the grass-green carpet and the carry-on luggage.
I think of my friend tonight, where she stops
near Denver or Laramie, looking up to bless the stars
as she would bless the superfluous, indestructible
objects by which the future will judge us—
plastic Jesuses and aluminum candlesnuffers
and laminated newspaper cutouts announcing the births
and the deaths and the marriages to which we have been unfaithful,
and to which we have been faithful, also,
like gravity, like a handful of truths
that, once they take hold, never let go again,
and return with us to the earth, as if the earth were elsewhere.

—Deborah Digges

• •

Joe Mirachi

"I'm sorry, I'm not speaking to anyone tonight. My defense mechanisms seem to be out of order."

• •

the cans on the shelves in alphabetical order. Near the kitchen stood a heavy sideboard, an exceedingly long dining table, and a dozen or so leather-backed chairs, all of which were dominated by an unignorable full-length portrait of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitchers' revered spiritual leader, who is universally referred to as "the Rebbe." "Rebbe" is a variant of the word "rabbi," which in Hebrew means "my master" or "my teacher," and it is the title given to the leaders of Hasidic courts. Rabbi Schneerson is the seventh Lubavitcher rebbe. The first was Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, who taught that a rebbe's central task was to "teach Hasidism according to the spirit of the times and the needs of the people"—a dictum that has been scrupulously adhered to by his successors.

Sheina led me over to the dining-room table. In the center of the table was a huge jumble of straw baskets, tangerines, pineapples, cookies, hard candies, rum cordials, pints of J & B Scotch, packets of nuts, and chocolate pastilles.

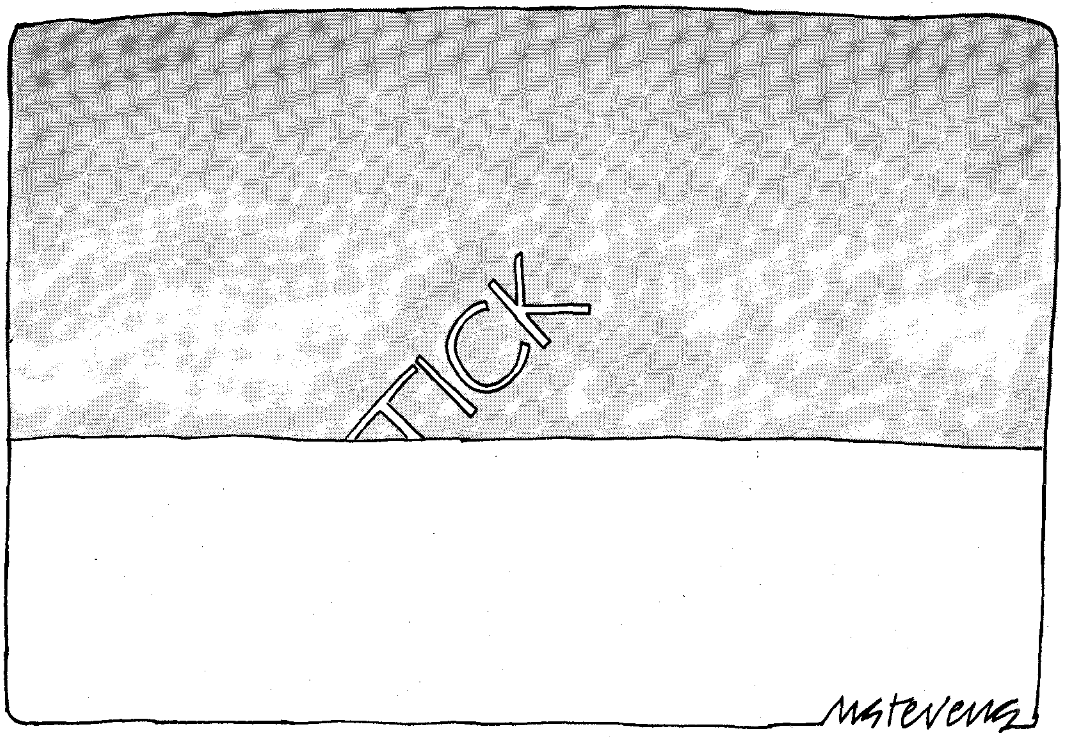
"Listen, we'll talk when we can, but you know it's Purim. I have to rush to make more *shalach-monos* baskets," she said.

"What are they?"

"Leah [the woman who referred me to the Konigsbergs] said you were Jewish. Didn't your family celebrate Purim?" Sheina asked, in a sympathetic tone that suggested that she already knew the answer to her question.

I explained that my family was not religious, and that their attitude toward their Jewishness was more or less that of fans whose home team was the Jews. I did not add that my mother, no longer alive, had regarded the Hasidim as "fanatics" and more than a little repellent, or that my octogenarian father, the pleasure-loving, Yankeefied son of Russian Jews who emigrated from St. Petersburg to Connecticut in the eighteen-seventies, had looked at me in wonder when I told him I'd always been curious about Hasidic life, and said, "But that's all old hat." During the long period that I was to spend getting to know the Konigsbergs and their community, I never encountered a single Jew who didn't have a strong opinion about the Hasidim. Gentile friends who knew about my visits to the Hasidic world asked polite questions. The Jews I knew were usually in one of two camps: those who did not like the Hasidim and were eager to share stories about their alleged hypocrisy—how they'd heard that Hasidim cheated in their business dealings, and so on—and those who had a kind of wistful, idealized view of Hasidic life. The language of the detractors might have been drawn from the lexicon of classic anti-Semitism: "They're really dirty. Have you seen how they keep their homes?" "They have no manners." "No one is pushier." "I hate their standoffishness." "Why do they think that they're better than everybody else?" "They're certainly unhealthy—you can tell that just by looking at them." The two camps were united in their conviction—mistaken, I was to learn—that most Hasidic practices were somehow fundamentally different from those of ordinary Orthodox Jews.

Shalach-monos, Sheina explained as she filled a basket with fruit and candy, meant "sending out of portions"—gifts of food and drink. It was customary for religious Jews to distribute the baskets, which were usually transported by the youngest member of the family, to friends on Purim. The night before, Sheina went on to say, everyone in the community had gone to 770 Eastern Parkway—the main Lubavitcher synagogue, which is the movement's official headquarters, and was where I had seen the men dancing —for a reading of the scroll of Esther,



M. Stevens

THE DAWN OF TIME

• •

in which the story of Esther and Haman is related. Then, that morning, she had gone to a neighbor's house to hear the story read again. The word *purim*, she said, meant "lots." Haman drew lots to choose the date on which he intended to kill all the Jews in the kingdom.

"Have you known about these things since you were a child?" I asked.

"Some of them, but I never really understood their deeper significance. I wasn't raised here, you know. I grew up in Michigan—in Bloomfield Hills, a suburb of Detroit. My dad is a businessman—he owns a large paint-manufacturing company—and I grew up like any well-to-do American girl, really. I went to movies and parties, I dated, and I sort of drifted along, like everyone else. My family called themselves Orthodox, but many Torah commandments were not strictly observed. I learned Hebrew when I was a girl, and we kept a kosher home and went to synagogue every Saturday, but I know that neither of my two brothers nor my sister and I ever really profoundly connected with any of it. Purim wasn't celebrated in the big way it is here, for instance—although it says specifically in Esther that the holiday is supposed to be a day of feasting and merrymaking. Here the day is like a carnival—we have a special Purim feast, and everything is completely unlike the rest of the year. It's the only day of the year besides Simchat Torah when it is considered appropriate to drink all day, and the whole community celebrates in one way or another. It's all commemorative, of course—a celebration of an occasion when, for once, Jews were spared from the destructive whims of their rulers. The rituals connected with the holiday keep people aware that the danger is always there. But they become far more meaningful when you begin to understand more about them, as I did when I became a Lubavitcher. It was different for Moshe. He grew up among Hasidim, and his family has always been Lubavitch. Even so, he's continuously studying—on his own and with his children. We were both married before, and each of us had five children. Moshe lost his wife in 1969, and I was divorced in 1974. It was the saddest time in my life, but this is the happiest, because—*baruch ha'Shem* [praise God]—I've come to understand that, like all Jews, I'm here for a purpose."

"And that is?"

"To see the beauty and holiness in everyday things. To try to elevate ordinary life. The key is in the Torah, and the way to get there has been shown us in a practical way by the *mitzvot*."

The *mitzvot* are the six hundred and thirteen positive and negative commandments derived from Scripture and referred to by Jewish sages in the first and second centuries of the present era. In the fourth century, a Palestinian rabbi divided them into positive and negative commandments, and in the eighth century they were enumerated, but few attempts were made to identify their source with any precision until the twelfth century, when Maimonides, in his typically lucid way, established that there were two hundred and forty-eight positive commandments and three hundred and sixty-five negative ones, and wrote a treatise in which he gave the scriptural origins of each of them. The list embraces virtually every facet of a religious Jew's day—indeed, of his life—from resting on the Sabbath (positive commandment No. 154) and fasting on Yom Kippur (positive commandment No. 164) to not profiting from anything connected with idolatry (negative commandment No. 25). Nothing is considered more central to the lives of religious Jews than the fulfillment of the commandments. Whatever impedes their fulfillment is considered to be in the realm of darkness; whatever contributes to it is in the realm of light.

Sheina's story was interrupted by the boisterous entrance of her husband and his two sons, Shmuel and Mendel, who had accompanied him to New Jersey. The face of one of the young men was flushed, and his eyes looked overbright. They were both talking to their father at the same time, in loud, excited voices, and as they talked their hands never stopped moving. Some revelling, it seemed, had already been taking place. All three wore black

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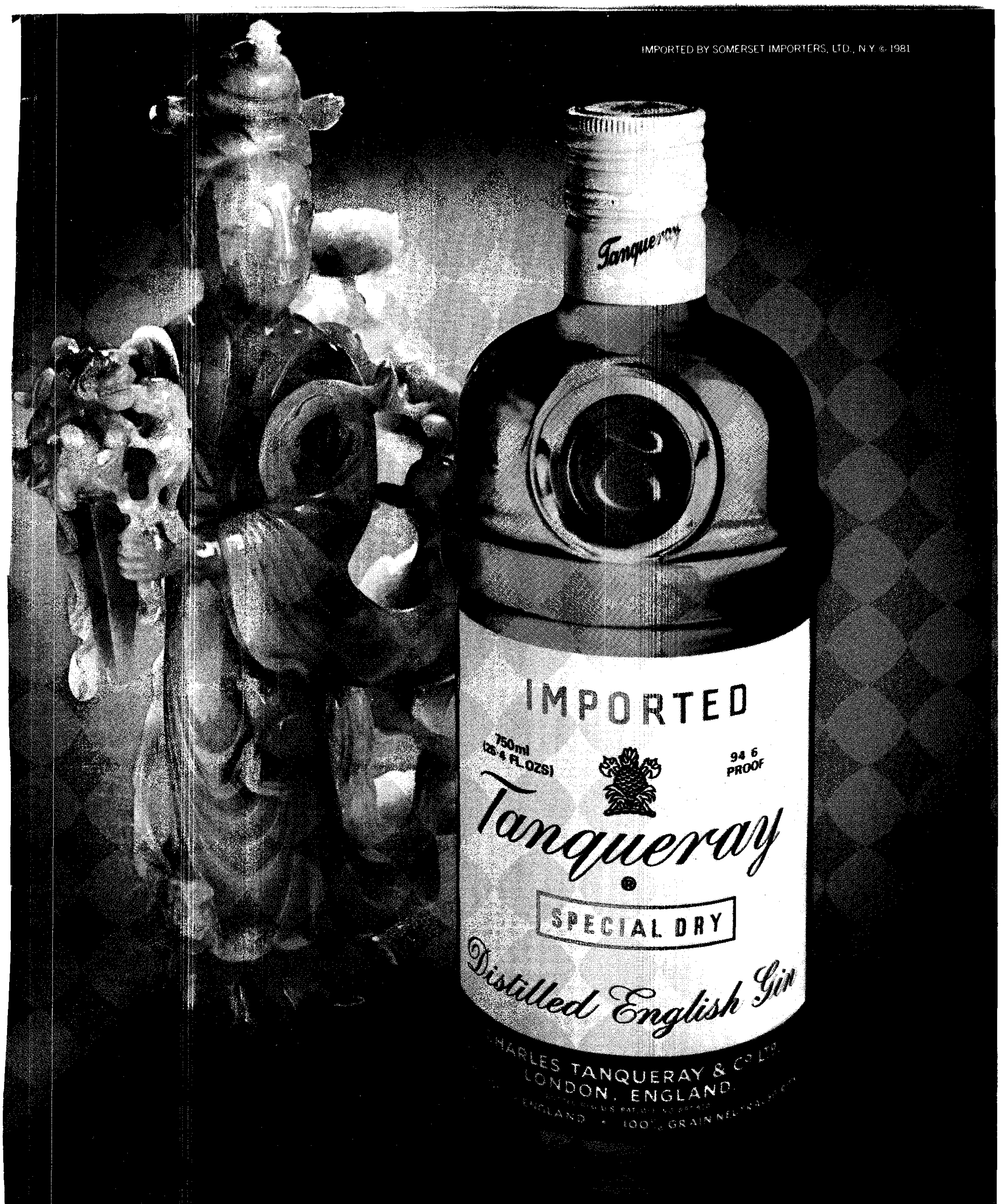
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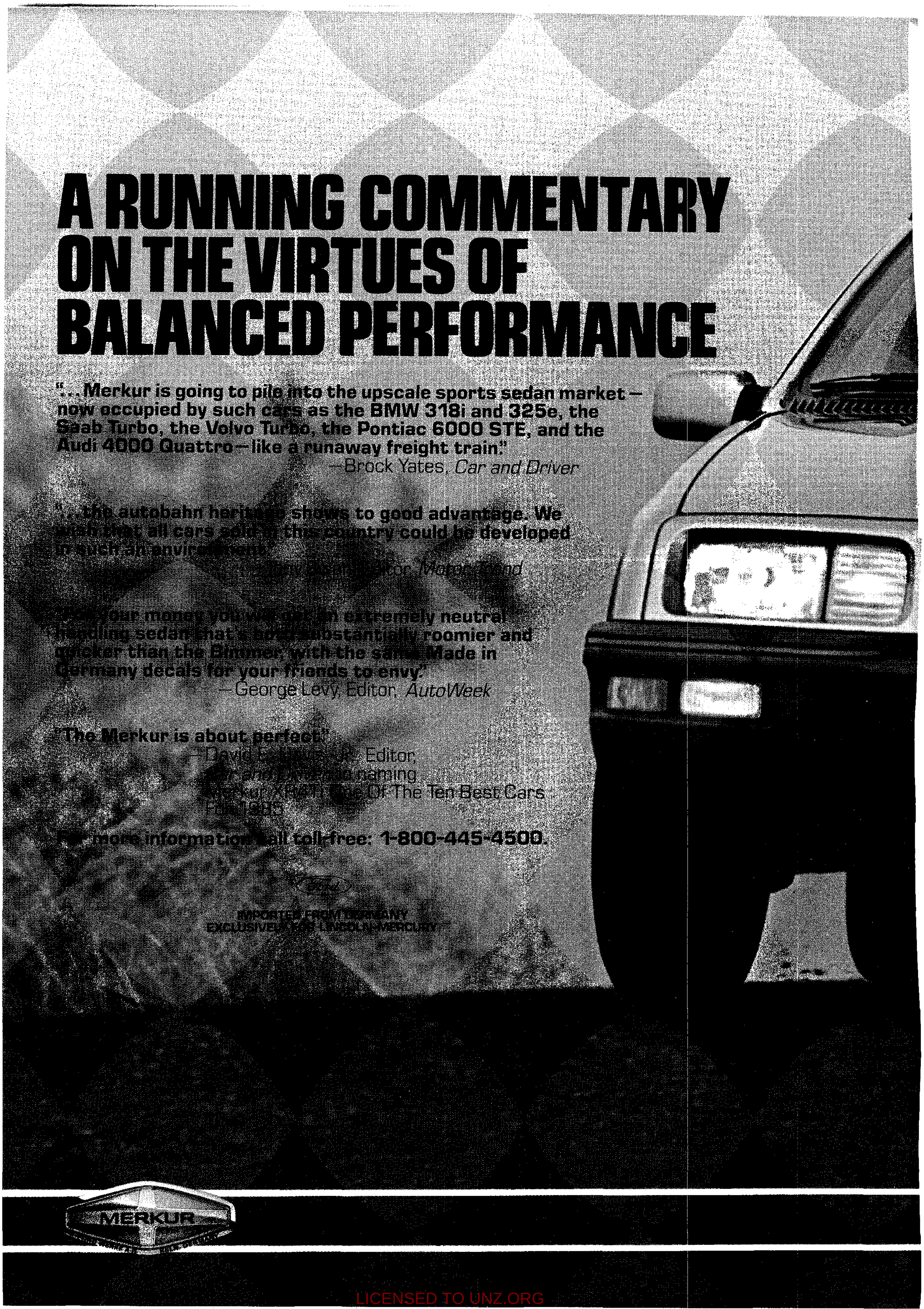

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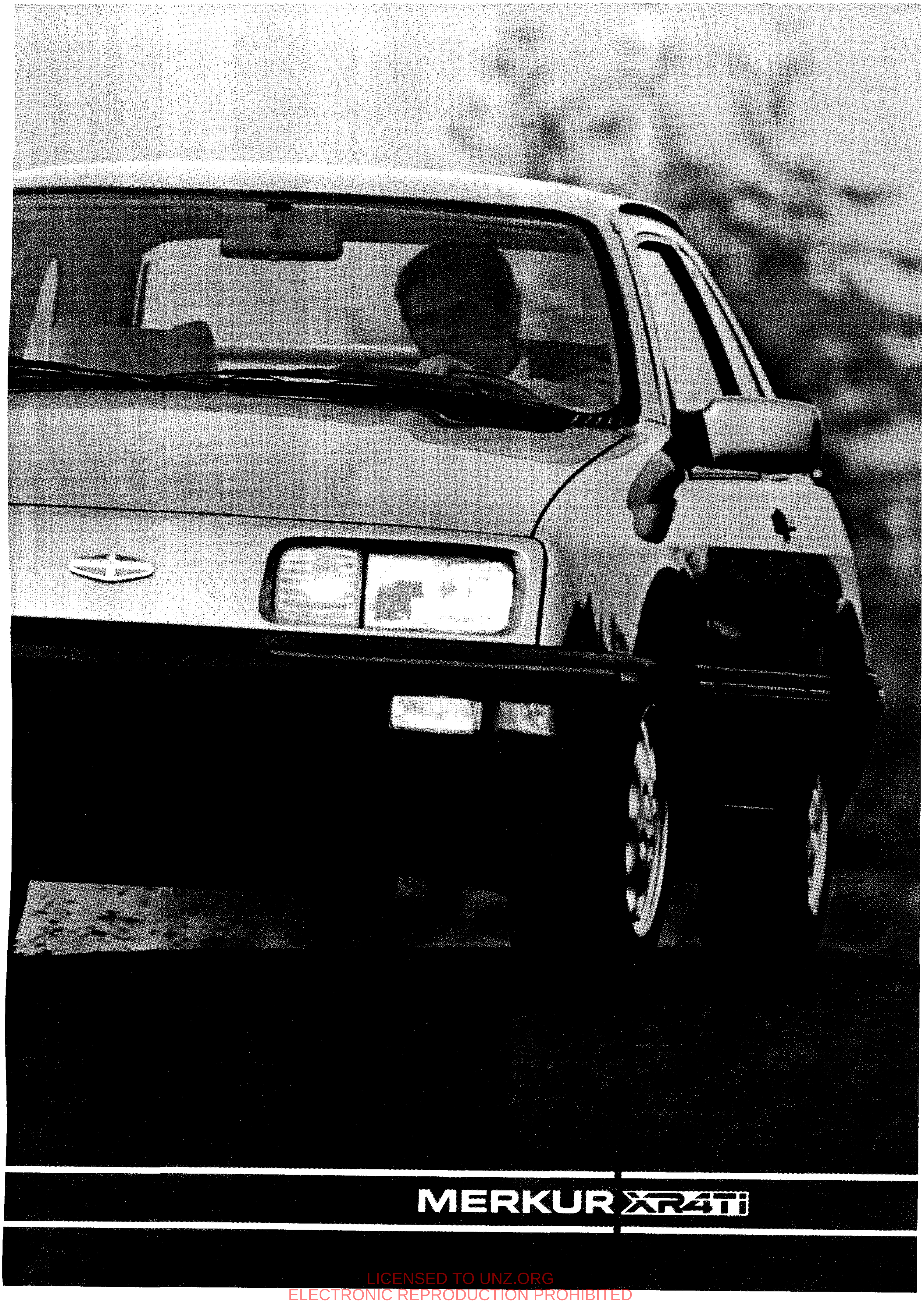
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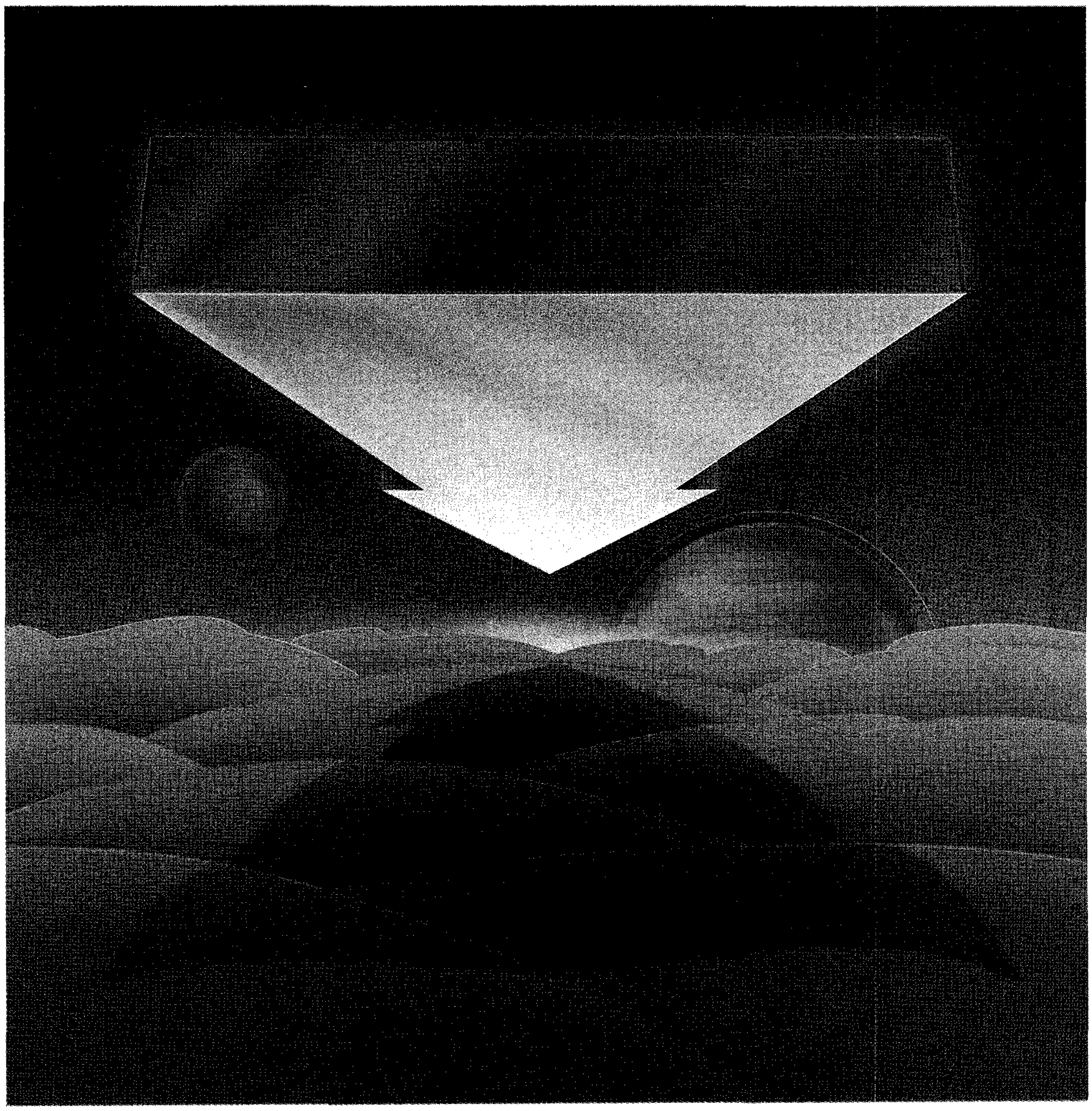
- *A governing or motivating process; aware management guiding highly resourceful and diverse areas of commercial and government business.*
- *A channel or course of action, like record performance nine straight years.*



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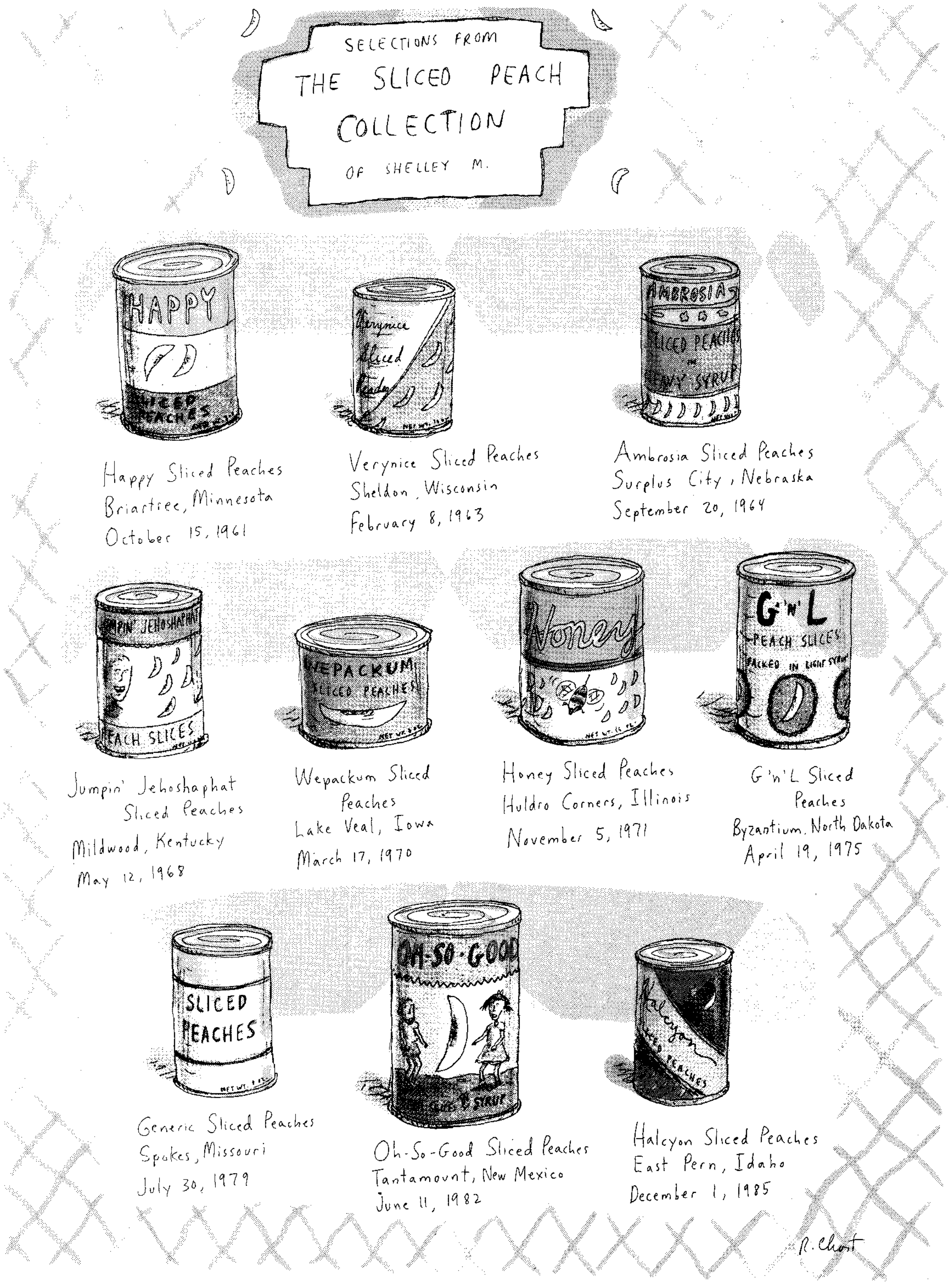
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Happy Sliced Peaches
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October 15, 1961
Verynice Sliced Peaches
Verynice Sliced Peaches
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February 8, 1963
AMBROSIA SLICED PEACHES IN HEAVY SYRUP
Ambrosia Sliced Peaches
Surplus City, Nebraska
September 20, 1964
JUMPIN' JEHOSHAPHAT PEACH SLICES
Jumpin' Jehoshaphat Sliced Peaches
Mildwood, Kentucky
May 12, 1968
WEPACKUM SLICED PEACHES
Wepackum Sliced Peaches
Lake Veal, Iowa
March 17, 1970
Honey
Honey Sliced Peaches
Huldro Corners, Illinois
November 5, 1971
G'N'L PEACH SLICES PACKED IN LIGHT SYRUP
G'n'L Sliced Peaches
Byzantium, North Dakota
April 19, 1975
SLICED PEACHES
Generic Sliced Peaches
Spokes, Missouri
July 30, 1979
OH-SO-GOOD
SYRUP
Oh-So-Good Sliced Peaches
Tantamount, New Mexico
June 11, 1982
Halcyon SLICED PEACHES
Halcyon Sliced Peaches
East Fern, Idaho
December 1, 1985
R. Chast

fedoras tipped slightly back on their heads, rumpled dark suits, and white shirts unbuttoned at the neck. Peeking out beneath their jackets were the ends of their *talisim katan*—four-cornered fringed undergarments that Orthodox men wear to remind them to fulfill their religious duties. Like all adult male Hasidim, they were bearded, in keeping with the Biblical injunction "neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard" (Leviticus 19:27). Unlike many other Hasidim, however, Lubavitcher men do not wear long *peyes* (sidelocks), their sages having interpreted the injunction against cutting beards as not requiring long sidelocks. (Lubavitcher boys, however, must wear them until their beards grow.) Nor do Lubavitchers wear *shtreimls*, the broad-brimmed fur hats favored by many Hasidim for the Sabbath and other special occasions, since the hats belong to no purely Jewish tradition but were merely an accessory that Eastern European Jews borrowed from their Polish overlords. Other Hasidic groups sometimes fault the Lubavitchers for not stressing the niceties of traditional Hasidic dress and for not davening—reciting the liturgical prayers—with the same outward show of emotion that many of them display. The Lubavitchers shrug off this sort of criticism. They maintain that though they follow the customs of their ancestors, the intensity of someone's religious feeling is a private affair, which can't be calibrated by the amount of rocking back and forth he does while praying, or by the fabric or style of his hat. One Israeli scholar who has written extensively about the Hasidim believes that variations in Hasidic dress came about as a result of compromises that had to be made when various czars and kaisers issued decrees forbidding Jews to dress differently from the rest of the population. While Hasidim could not remove their hats (a sign of respect for God) under any circumstances, they could in good conscience adopt the hat styles of their countrymen.

Moshe Konigsberg had dark, heavily hooded, lively eyes, softly rounded features, a bald pate, small, delicate hands, and a long white beard that made him look much older than his fifty-odd years. His eyebrows and what was left of his hair were still black. The brows sloped upward toward a deep furrow, giving his face a fixed quizzical expression, and he wore black-framed glasses that perched rather low on his nose and looked as if they might slide off at any moment. Like Sheina, to whom he gave a broad smile when he came into the room (Hasidic husbands and wives are forbidden to kiss or in any way embrace each other in public), he moved around a lot when he talked, and exuded an air of quiet energy. When Sheina introduced us, Moshe stared at me with open curiosity, but his sons regarded me warily (the expressions of two British colonists surprised in their compound by a paint-bedaubed, spear-carrying tribesman would not have been dissimilar), and their ebullience vanished. Mendel, the younger, was twenty—a thin, angular young man with olive skin, a wispy mustache and beard, and a rather Oriental appearance. Shmuel, five years older, had a dark, bushy beard, a potbelly, and a preoccupied manner. He yawned and looked at Mendel. Mendel said that it had been a long drive back from the prison and they were both tired, but as Moshe and I headed toward a large round table in the family's sunny breakfast room, next to the kitchen, to have a chat they nearly tripped over each other following us and proceeded to station themselves on either side of their father like two yeomen. When I asked Moshe to tell me a little about his family history, both of them gazed at him unhappily.

"What's so interesting about his personal life? It's irrelevant. It's what we do as a community that matters," Shmuel said. His remark was addressed to his brother.

"Sha, it's all right—people want to know a little about these things, too," his father said, giving him a reassuring look. Moshe talked fast and with a Yiddish accent (the first language of most Hasidic homes is Yiddish) that had slight Slavic overtones. He punctuated his words with little jabs of a cigarette in a black holder.

"My family has been Hasidic since the beginning of the movement, in the eighteenth century, and nearly all of us have been Lubavitchers," he said. "Most of the stories I know about them begin with my great-grandfather Isaac, who was a ritual slaughterer and a disciple of the third Lubavitcher rebbe. My family came from a little town in the Ukraine, near Ekaterinoslav. At that time, which was about 1840, the Rebbe's followers all went to visit him in Lubavitch at least once a year, to take stock of their lives. My great-grandfather had to travel for several days to get there. Well, one year when he arrived at the Rebbe's house he found the door to the Rebbe's room closed and a little crowd of Hasidim huddled outside it. They were taking turns looking through the keyhole, so my great-grandfather looked, too. The Rebbe was praying

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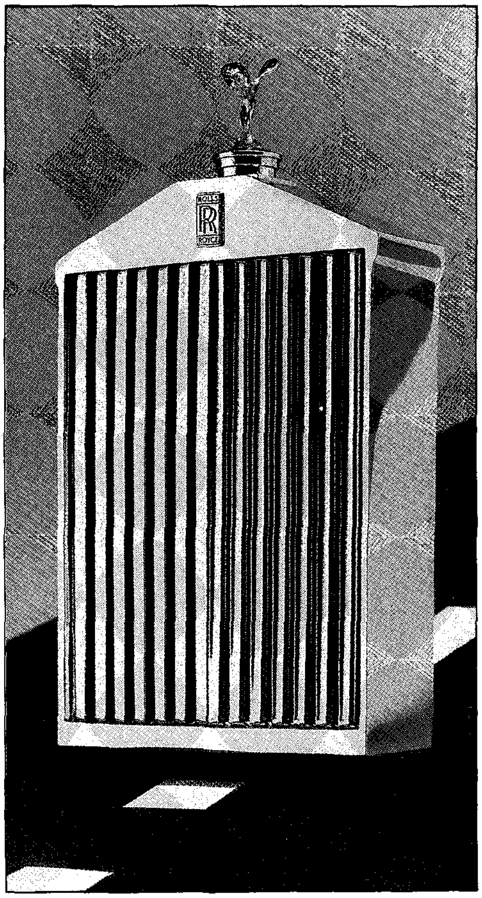

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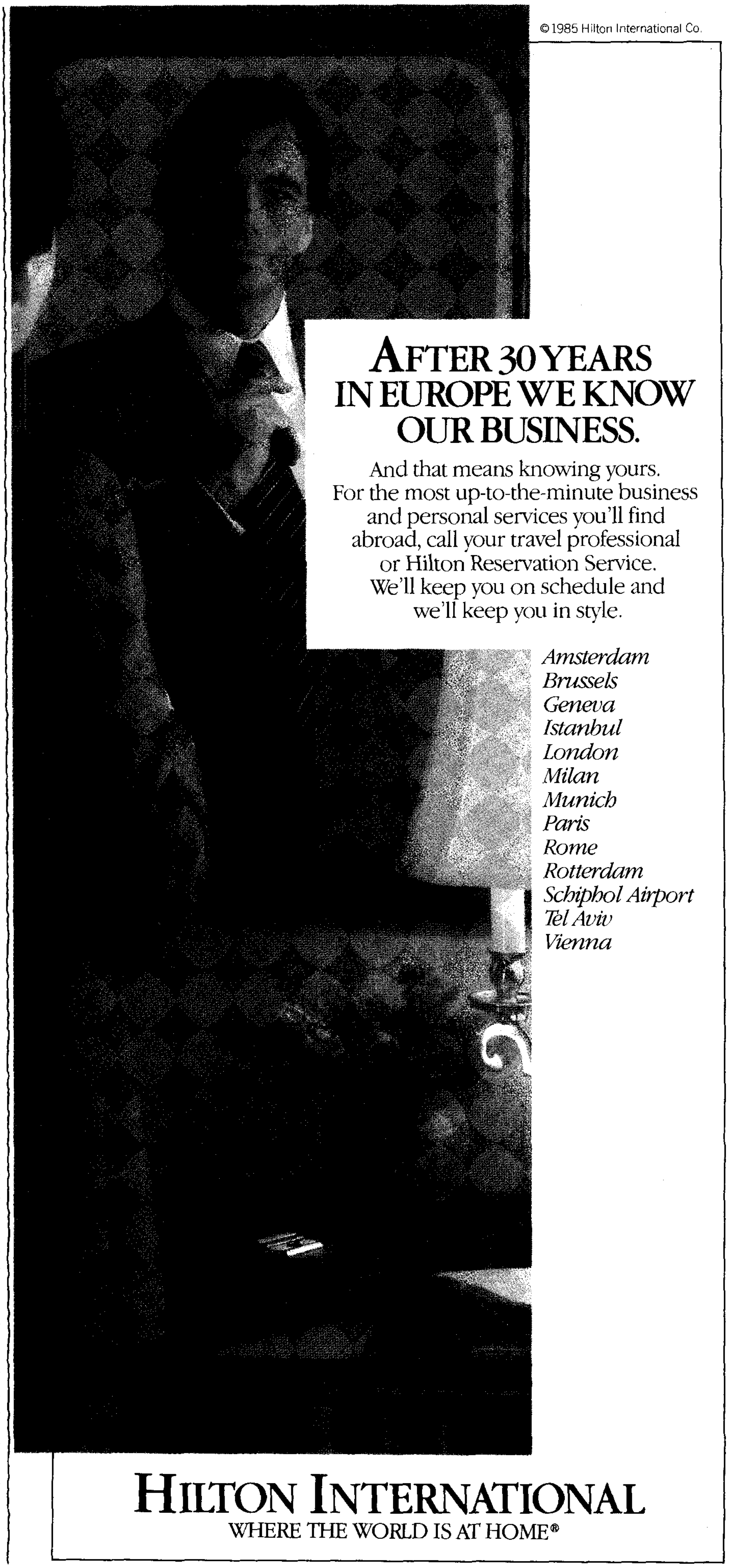
with such intensity that he was filled with awe. The Rebbe's concentration and the deep feeling with which he prayed stirred my great-grandfather so much that when he heard the Rebbe say, '*Ayn od milvado*' ["There is no one but God"] he fainted. Some time later, when he'd been revived, the Rebbe called him into the room. Well, my great-grandfather thought, we're certainly going to talk about deep spiritual matters today. But, much to his surprise, the Rebbe said to him, 'Let's talk in practical terms about your life. You're a good ritual slaughterer and you're respected by those who know you. It's enough for you to be a pious man. When you leave here, you will prosper.' Naturally, my great-grandfather asked him how he was to go about finding the path to this sudden prosperity. The Rebbe told him simply to seize the first opportunity that presented itself. Sure enough, on the way home he met the landlord of the village. The landlord had to buy some sugar in a distant town but didn't want to make the journey himself, so he asked my great-grandfather, who had a reputation for trustworthiness, if he would get it for him. My great-grandfather agreed, of course, and eventually he did more and more for the landowner and increased his responsibilities until he became a wealthy man. By the way, my great-grandmother died rather young, and my great-grandfather's second wife, a widow, was Leon Trotsky's grandmother. My father was a young man when Trotsky was around, but he told me that they used to say that whenever Trotsky came to town a bank would be robbed."

Since the arrival of Moshe and the boys, the doorbell had rung about a dozen times. The visitors—small children in costume, older boys in sober dark suits, and teen-age girls in starched, chaste dresses—would scurry in, present Sheina with a generously filled basket, wish everybody a *freilicher* ("happy") Purim, chat for a few minutes, then rush off to deliver baskets to other friends and relatives. The room had begun to look like a stateroom on the QE 2 on sailing day. Cellophane-wrapped baskets covered the coffee table, the dining table, and the couch. The phone rang almost constantly, and twice I overheard Sheina agreeing to put up out-of-towners who needed a place to stay on the coming Sabbath. It was clear from her conversation that she'd never laid eyes on any of her prospective



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guests. Before my visit, I'd somehow imagined that the Konigsbergs' house would be a dark, cluttered place, full of crumbling books and yellowed pamphlets. Instead, I seemed to have stumbled into the Hasidic Hilton.

"My paternal grandfather was a workingman, too—a blacksmith—but he had knowledge and wisdom, and he was well respected," Moshe continued. "In the little town where he lived, there was a rabbinical court, a *beth din*, and he was one of the three men who sat on it. My mother's father was one of the others. After the Revolution, the Cossacks were looking for vengeance, and they killed tens of thousands of Jews. A band of them came to my mother's father's house, and a Cossack pointed a gun at him. My mother saved him. She just stepped in front of him and said, 'Kill me.' They were lucky—they'd been threatened by a fellow who was impressed by gallantry. Others weren't so lucky. In the Second World War, my father's father was killed by the Germans, along with all the other Jews of the town. They just came one day and asked every Jew to bring a shovel to the outskirts of town. Then they shot them and buried them there. Just like that. My father, thank God, had already married and left by then. He had been sent as a young man to the Lubavitcher yeshiva in Lubavitch to study. During the First World War, he fought with the czarist partisans and became a German prisoner of war. When he returned to the village, in 1920, the pogrom I was talking about had started, so he joined the Jewish Self-Defense, a detachment of the Red Army. That's why so many Jews became Bolsheviks at that time—not for ideological reasons but because it was the Bolsheviks who saved them from the Cossacks. It was not long, of course, before the Communists became the Jews' bitter enemies. Later that year, my mother and father moved to Petrograd. They thought that they'd find better opportunities in the city. But it was hard to lead a full religious life. There was no special place where Jews lived. They were scattered all around, and fearful. Any communication with the Rebbe had to be couched in secret language, and, of course, the yeshivas had to be secret, because religious education was forbidden."

I asked Moshe what he remembered of his own life in Russia.

"I was born in 1928, and I have two sisters—one younger, one older. In some ways, we grew up like ordi-

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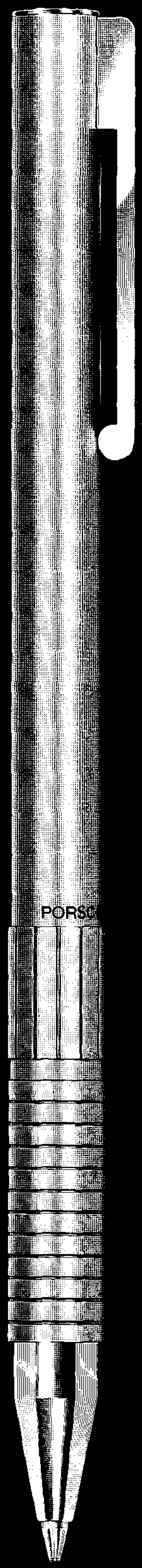

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nary Russian children. Most of the children in the neighborhood were Gentile, and we played with them. My parents didn't like it, but that's the way it was. We went to circuses like other children, but we were not educated in Russian schools. We had private tutors who could teach us Yiddish and Hebrew as well as other subjects. Of course, we already spoke Russian. My father told the authorities that we were too bright for the local public schools. That's what all the Hasidim did. We got away with it."

"What was your father's profession?"

"He was a stationer. People were allowed to have private businesses for a while in the nineteen-twenties, so my father opened up a stationery factory. When the government took it over, in 1928, he just stayed on. But then working on the Sabbath became a problem, so he started a photography business, which was kind of an adjunct to the stationery factory. He opened up little photography stands in the public parks and hired Gentiles to work on Saturdays. We made a living, but we were not really *living*. The Bolsheviks completely disrupted the life of the Jewish community. Everything we did had to be secret. We had secret *mikvahs* [ritual baths], secret Torah study groups, secret circumcisions, secret businesses so Jews could work at home and earn money and not have to work on Saturdays, and even secret places where we could pray in peace. Many people got caught—especially the Hasidic leaders, who went around trying to hold people together and organize the religious life of the community. Many of them were sent to prison or to the labor camps. But I think that the arrest of the sixth Lubavitcher rebbe in 1927—even though he was eventually released—was what convinced people that Russia was not *ever* going to be a place where we could lead a full religious life or count on our safety. That was when my family decided to leave. But, of course, deciding to leave was one thing and getting visas was another. The Russians, you know, don't like Jews in their country, but they don't like them to leave, either. Paradoxical, yes? My mother started going to the visa office regularly in 1933. She went several times a week, but it wasn't until 1937 that they finally gave her the visas and we left for Palestine."

"How did it feel to be in Palestine?"

"We felt like birds freed from a cage. For years—though we were not

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Zionists—we had seen pictures of Tel Aviv, and our hearts had pounded. Three times a day, in our prayers, we speak of longing to go to Zion, and there we were! It felt—well, you just can't imagine how it felt. Wonderful! First, it was the Jewish homeland, and, second, it was a free country. My parents are gone now, but they stayed in Israel until they died. They sent us to Lubavitcher schools when we got there, and then, in 1947, they sent me to New York to continue my studies at the yeshiva here. My older sister came here a few years later—she lives just a few blocks away, with her family—but my younger sister and her family stayed in Israel. When I thought about it, I guess, I always expected that I would be a teacher, but the Rebbe thought that I should be a metal engraver, so I became a metal engraver. I married my first wife, a Baltimore woman, in 1952, and we lived in Baltimore for a while. But we moved to New York in 1957, and I've been here ever since. I used to work for somebody else, but now I own my own business."

I asked Moshe what he considered the main differences between himself and an ordinary Orthodox Jew.

He pulled on his beard. "Well, there are more similarities than differences, because Jewish law is Jewish law. But we probably do things more wholeheartedly as a group, we have a more mystical leaning, we never stop trying to bend our natural characteristics toward more godly ones, and maybe we pay more attention to the holiness of things in the physical world. Isaac Luria [a sixteenth-century Kabbalist] said that everything has a soul, even inanimate things. We're taught to show respect for these things. We're taught not to throw bread, for example, or step on food. I remember walking down the street with my father when I was a boy, and if he saw a piece of food lying on the street he'd pick it up so no one would step on it. The previous rebbe told a story about a walk he took with his father one day. They were studying together, and he was so deeply engrossed in whatever his father was saying that he absent-mindedly tore a leaf off a tree. Well, he hadn't meant any harm, but his father chided him for doing it. Why? Because there was a spark of godliness in the leaf, which deserved to run its own course."

"There are a lot of Orthodox people whose daily lives look just like ours," Sheina called in from the other

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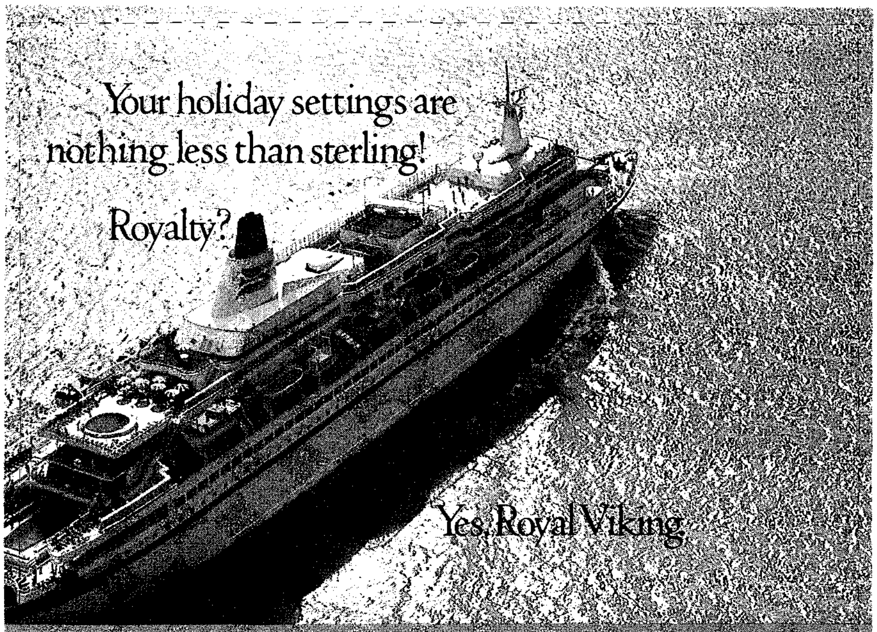

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room, where she was still filling baskets, "except that they don't live in communities quite like ours or have a rebbe for a spiritual leader, so many of them feel quite isolated. And, of course, there are the kinds of Jews like the ones I was telling you about earlier, who like to consider themselves Orthodox but really aren't." Peering into the breakfast room with a pineapple in each hand, she added, "But these labels—Orthodox, Conservative, Reform—have no real meaning to us. As far as we're concerned, a Jew is a Jew. Nobody's relationship to God can be conveyed by a label."

Shmuel nudged his father and looked at the clock. Moshe said that he had to go to evening prayers, but suggested that I return on a coming Friday to spend the Sabbath with the family. I accepted his invitation and automatically held out my hand to shake his—forgetting momentarily that no extrafamilial physical contact between the sexes, however casual, is permitted in the Hasidic world—then quickly pulled it back when I realized my mistake. Moshe just gazed at the ceiling. Shmuel and Mendel exchanged knowing looks.

While the men were putting on their coats, Sheina, who had gone back to filling baskets at the table, beckoned to me. Looking up briefly as she nestled some Reese's Peanut Butter Cups around a pineapple, she asked in a low voice what had motivated me to learn about Hasidic life. It was to be the only time she ventured a question of that nature and the only time anyone in the family ever expressed an interest in my personal beliefs. I said that I was merely intellectually curious, but even as I said it I realized that it probably wasn't entirely true. That Sheina did not accept my answer as adequate was obvious from the amused if forbearing look she shot at me. The fact is that, having known as many different kinds of Jews as different kinds of Gentiles, I had never much troubled myself with the whole "What is a Jew?" issue, and considered it fairly irrelevant. I accepted my own Jewishness as one of the things that helped define me, like my dark hair, brown eyes, and left-handedness; but my spiritual upbringing, such as it was, rested largely upon the gentle New England civilities of my father's childhood and the tolerant urban values of my mother's. I knew that many Jews still found plenty of nourishment in the synagogues and other institutions associated with the various Jew-

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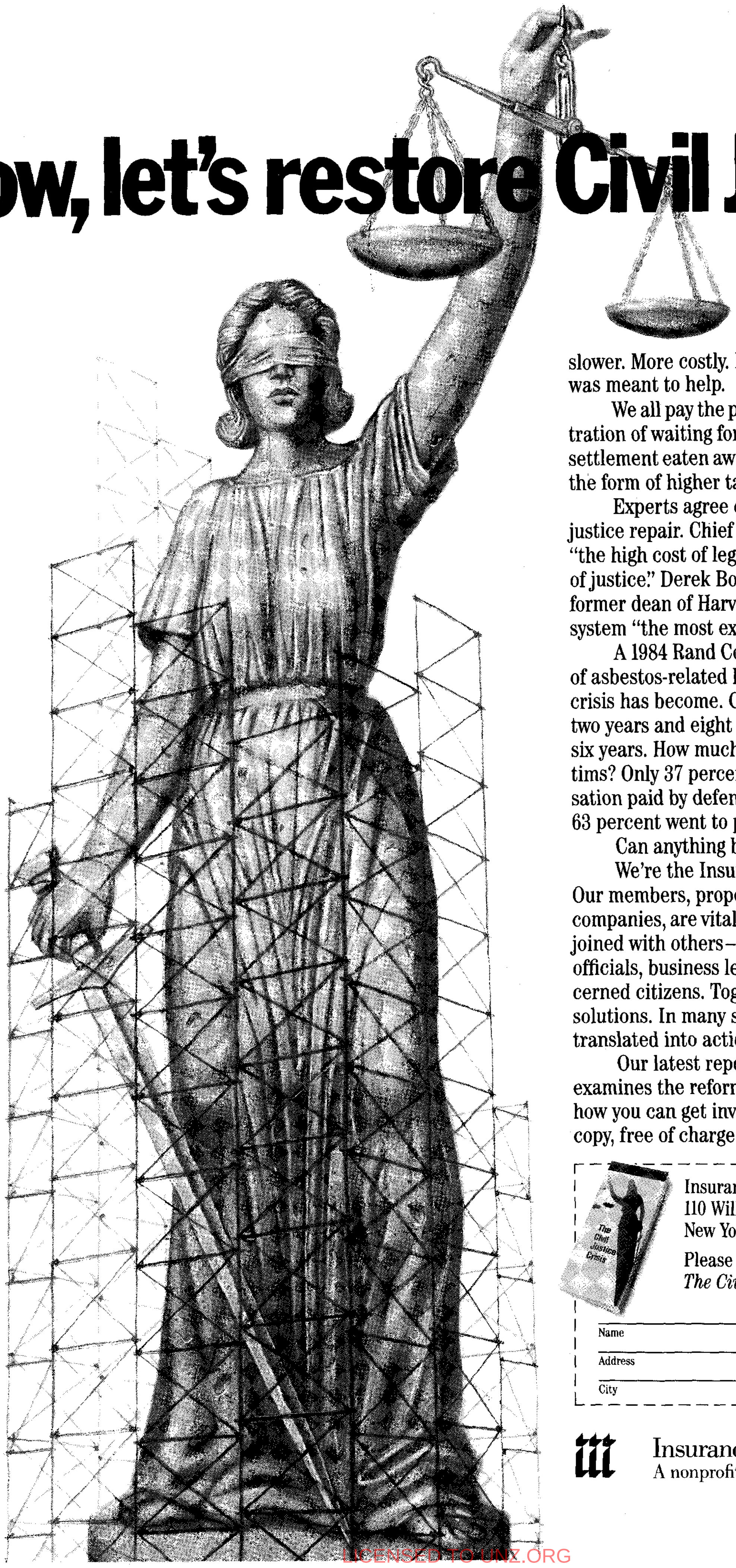

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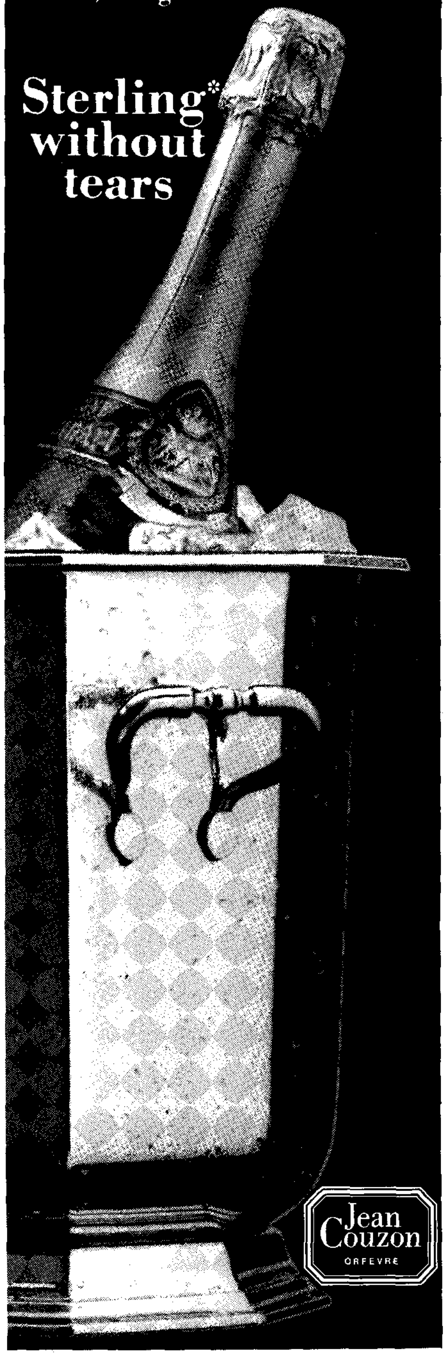

ish denominations, but nobody I knew well did, and the only personal glimpses I'd had of the religious life (droning congregants, unintelligible prayers, posturing rabbis) did not impel me to plumb those depths any further. I'd always taken it for granted that the diluted rituals and distracted congregations I observed were merely faint echoes of a tradition that had once been immensely vital. Why else had so many generations of skeptical, spiritual people, most of whose descendants now looked to everything but religion—books, music, love, art, even sports—for spiritual uplift, remained loyal to that tradition for thousands of years? But if whatever was meaningful or attractive about communal Jewish religious life was nowadays absent from so many places, where was it present? It was present in Jewish literature, of course, but at one remove. Surely the Holocaust had not succeeded in eradicating all the strength and passion of religious communities except what had been needed to create and maintain a Jewish state. Newspaper articles alluded from time to time to the resurgence of interest in Orthodoxy and to various revisionist efforts to organize Jewish groups along more modern lines, but I suspected that I could recover the past in its most vital form in a Hasidic community. The central beliefs of Judaism are incompatible with notions of celibacy or prolonged separation from the hubbub of everyday life, and therefore Jews have no monasteries or nunneries, but if one was searching for a place where the practice of religion was uppermost in Jewish life the Hasidic court seemed to be the best place to look. Perhaps, too, I saw in myself the same cultural alienation, obsessiveness, and urge for transcendence that people attributed to the Hasidim. I have a horror of conformity—I am uneasy watching even the happy marchers in parades, for example—but I wondered if, beyond my own psychological makeup and my secular values and preoccupations, my attraction to them was not so much an attraction of opposites as a case of one side of a coin wanting to know what the other was like.

As Moshe was leaving, he turned to me and said, "Well, good luck in your researches."

"Thanks," I said. "By the way, are there any books about Hasidism that you think might be helpful?"

"There are no books."

"No books! Why, what do you mean? You must know that hundreds of books have been written about Hasidism."

"Books about Hasidic matters always misrepresent things. They twist and change the truth in casual ways. I trust Lubavitcher books, like the 'Tanya' [a work written by the movement's founder] and the collections of the rebbes' discourses, because our rebbe got the information in them from the rebbe before him, and so on, in an unbroken chain. I trust scholars I can talk to, face to face. But most books tell lies, even if the lies are unintentional. I read secular books on Jewish subjects from time to time. They're like the newspapers—if you know anything about the subject they're writing about, you know that they haven't got the facts straight. Most books distort things."

"But there has been a great deal of highly respected scholarly work published about Hasidic matters," I said.

"Most of it written by outsiders. There are always errors. Lots of errors. You want to know who we are? Read what we read. Read the Torah. Read Hasidic texts."

"Is there no outside scholar you trust?"

Moshe thought for a moment or two, shook his head, shrugged, and said, "No." Then he smiled and left, his sons following closely in his wake like escort galleons in a threatened fleet.

ALTHOUGH Hasidism as a modern movement began in the eighteenth century, its roots go back to Biblical times. The Hebrew word *hasid* means, literally, "pious one" and has always denoted a kind of spiritual rigorousness. The term appears in the Book of Psalms and in the Apocryphal books of Maccabees I and II. In the second century B.C., in Palestine, a group called the Hasideans joined in the revolt of Judas Maccabaeus against the Hellenized Syrian Antiochus Epiphanes, who was attempting to Hellenize the Jews. These Hasideans, although known for their purity and saintliness, were not considered different in any way from their fellow-Jews (as, later, the Hasidim were); they were simply admired by their co-religionists for their intense piety and their staunch adherence to their religion in the face of persecution.

A more recent antecedent of modern Hasidism was the Hasidic movement in Germany in the Middle Ages. This early movement, which never achieved the popularity of eighteenth-century Hasidism, flourished from about the middle of the twelfth century to the middle of the thirteenth, and produced a widely read book, the "Book of the Pious," which was an esoteric examination of the Pentateuch, traditionally ascribed to Judah the Hasid of Worms. Although medieval and eighteenth-century Hasidism had little in common, both movements focussed on a mystical interpretation of the Law and helped unify a multitude of unlettered but pious Jews in eras marked by violence and upheaval.

Like so much in Jewish history, the transmission of German Hasidism as well as other forms of German culture to Eastern Europe can be credited largely to a catastrophe—in this case the anti-Semitic campaigns of the Crusades, which forced thousands of Jews to migrate to Poland. It was the Muslims, of course, who were the avowed enemies of the Crusaders, but they were far away and costly to vanquish. The Jews, on the other hand, were never far away. Large numbers of Jews began to emigrate eastward in 1096, during the First Crusade, when the Crusaders decimated the Jewish population of Mainz. It was said that the Crusaders killed more than a thousand Jews in a single day. Similar massacres took place in many Rhine communities along the Crusaders' route to Palestine. Moshe had mentioned at our first meeting that he thought that some of his early ancestors were German and might well have been among those eastward-bound emigrants.

Most of the history of Jewish life in that bleak period has been lost, but large chunks of it were unearthed by the Russian historian Simon Dubnow—the first serious independent scholar of Hasidism to place the movement in any kind of historical context—who was killed by the Nazis, in Riga, in 1941. Some of Dubnow's views about the Hasidim—especially his ideas about the role that historical inevitability played in the movement's rise—are regarded as outdated, but even scholars who question his assumptions acknowledge a debt of gratitude to his research on the early history of East European Jewry, which is so far unmatched in its comprehensiveness. Dubnow would, I suppose, be a good example of the sort of writer Moshe warned me against—and one, I confess, of many I was to repair to frequently, nonetheless. The great majority of the Hasidic texts that Moshe

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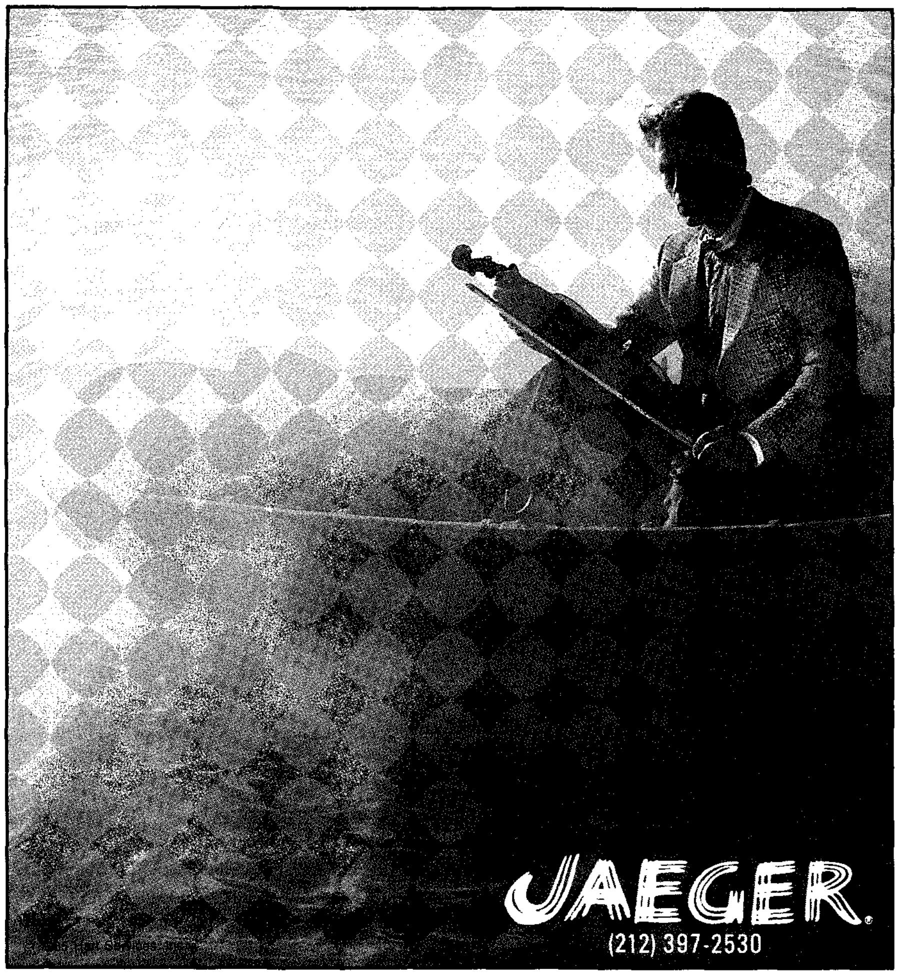
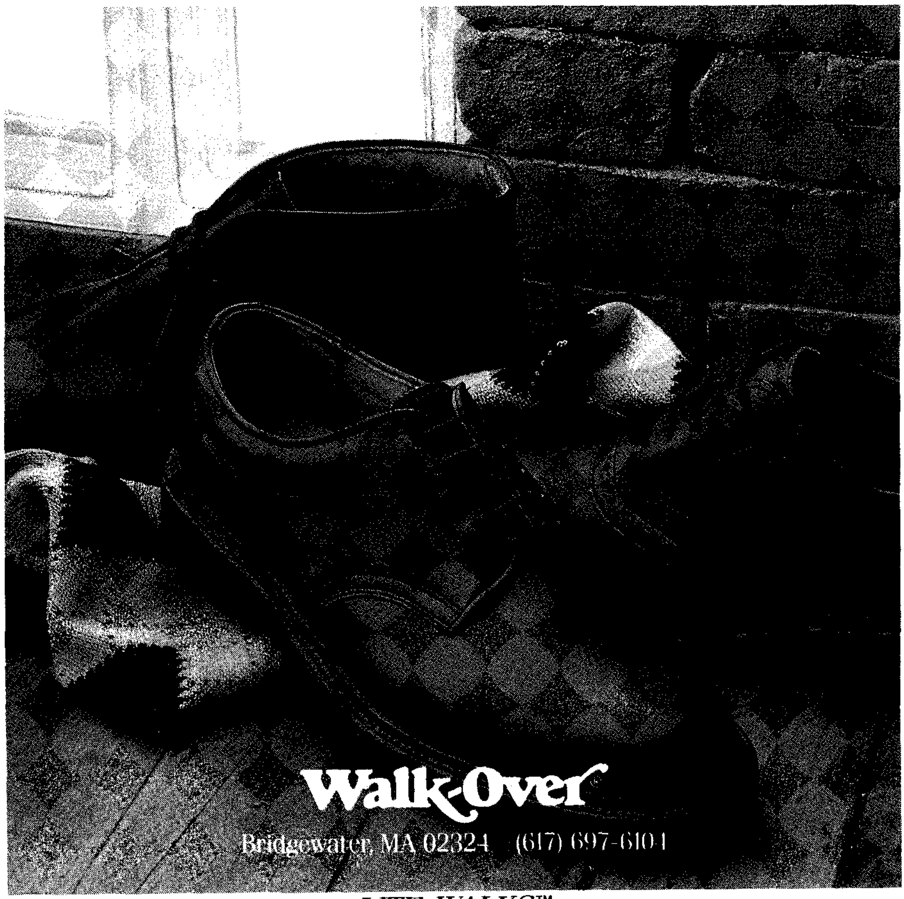
approved of were written for those whose knowledge of Hasidic—not to mention Talmudic—luminaries and principles was extensive. These texts rarely place the author's thoughts in any sort of historical or temporal perspective, and even more rarely pause to define or explain the arcane philosophical terminology they use. One reason they do not is that most of them were written in the form of homiletic snippets and refer to passing events or esoteric phenomena that even scholars of Judaic matters often find impenetrable. Another is that from time immemorial it has been the practice in Jewish religious education to pore over every text line by line, subject it to the closest scrutiny, and discuss it ad infinitum; the seminal books of Hasidism were written by and for scholars, to whom the notion of an inquiring reader sitting alone in an armchair, far from the synagogue study hall, was inconceivable. For such readers—and I was certainly one of them—"outsiders" like Dubnow and some more recent scholars provide a necessary framework for the Hasidic masters' recondite excursions into the realm of pure thought. In Dubnow's "History of the Jews in Russia and Poland," he reveals, for example, that virtually the only constant in the secular life of the Polish Jew in the Middle Ages was danger. Various liberal kings tried to extend their protection to their Jewish subjects, but the Catholic clergy, which controlled the Polish Diet and was violently antagonistic to the Jews, nullified most of the royal statutes and edicts designed to help them. The clergy passed its own laws, forbidding Jews to keep Christian servants, wet nurses, or nursery maids; forbidding Jews to live in Christian neighborhoods; forbidding Christians, at the risk of being excommunicated, to invite Jews to a meal or to drink with them, or to buy meat from them (lest it be poisoned); requiring Jews to lock themselves in their houses when church processions passed; and requiring Jews to sew a ring of red cloth on the left side of their upper garments. Any Jewish man who was found to be living with a Christian woman was subject to a fine and imprisonment, and the woman was subject to a public whipping and permanent banishment from the town. On the other hand, the Polish nobles, who were frequently absentee landlords, welcomed the eastward-migrating Jews for their financial skills and their proficiency as land and business managers. Eventually,





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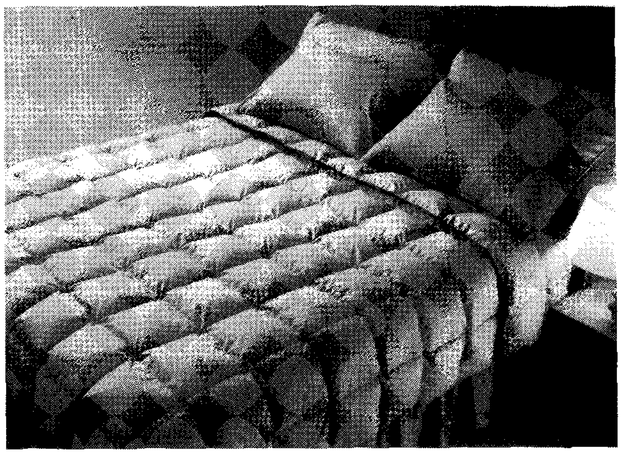

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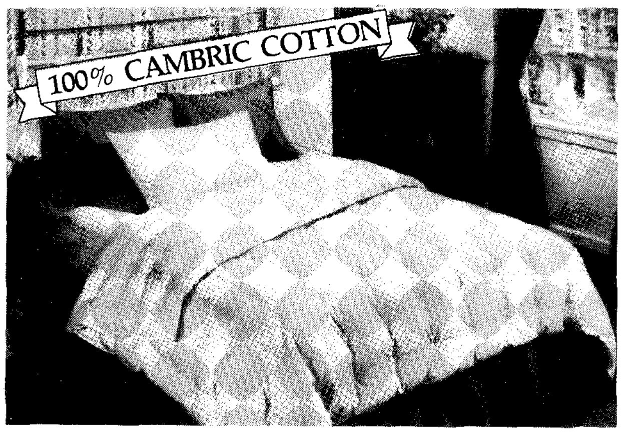

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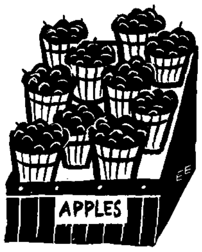
the Jews became the tax collectors in the towns and hamlets that were privately owned by the Polish nobles, and they also became *arendars*, or lessees (originally of farms, later of taverns or other sources of revenue for the landowners), who helped to supervise the dairies, mills, and distilleries that supplied the nobles with the largest part of their income. It was in the interest of the noble landlords to protect the Jews from the clergy and from the anti-Semitic rabble, but they did not. Being notoriously weak and lazy, and living far from their estates, they were ill-equipped to protect anybody.



In the middle of the seventeenth century, the Ukraine—then a part of Poland, and a place where the Hasidic movement would flourish—witnessed the worst series of pogroms Jews were to suffer until the twentieth century. The peasants, most of whom belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, were oppressed by heavy taxes and humiliated by the condescension and antagonism shown them by the Roman Catholic clergy. Unprotected by their Polish lords or by the Polish Church, they organized themselves into warlike bands to fight off marauding Tatars from the Russian steppes and the khanate of the Crimea. Somewhat drunk with their success in defending themselves, they turned next against the government, and became a force to be reckoned with. "The mutiny of the Cossacks and the Ukrainian peasants in 1648 inaugurates in the history of the Jews of Eastern Europe the era of pogroms, which Southern Russia bequeathed to future generations," Dubnow writes. "In the spring of 1648 . . . one of the popular Cossack leaders, Bogdan Khmelnitsky . . . unfurled the banner of rebellion in the Ukraine and in the region beyond the Dnieper Falls. . . . Peasants and town dwellers left their homes, and, organizing themselves into bands, devastated the estates . . . slaying their owners as well as the stewards and Jewish arendars. . . . The rebels allowed only those to survive who embraced the Greek Orthodox faith."

A Russian historian of the time reported, "Killing was accompanied by barbarous tortures; the victims were flayed alive, split asunder, clubbed to death, roasted on coals, or scalded with boiling water. Even infants at the breast were not spared. The most terrible cruelty, however, was shown toward the Jews. They were destined to utter annihilation, and the slightest pity shown to them was looked upon as treason. Scrolls of the Law were taken out of the synagogues by the Cossacks, who danced on them while drinking whiskey. After this, Jews were laid down upon them, and butchered without mercy. Thousands of Jewish infants were thrown into wells, or buried alive." It has been estimated that between 1648 and 1658 as many as five hundred thousand Jews perished.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century, religious trials, in which Jews were accused of outlandish, malevolent things (desecration of Church sacraments and ritual murder of children, for example), were a common occurrence. A number of Polish kings again attempted to protect the Jews' businesses and property rights and to shield them from harassment, and, again, most of these attempts were thwarted by the regulations of the Polish Diets, which were still controlled by the virulently anti-Semitic Catholic clergy.

Ever since 1492, when the Jews were expelled from Spain, ideas about exile and redemption had been a growing preoccupation of Judaic scholarship. Most rabbinical leaders—and probably most ordinary Jews—believed that if God allowed the abuse of His supposedly chosen people it was because they had failed to obey His laws stringently enough. To rectify this, rabbis enjoined their congregations to follow God's commandments more carefully and heed their ramifications as outlined by the sages of the Talmud. Opposing this view were the Kabbalists, or Jewish mystics. They shared the belief that the Jews were not faithfully following the commandments, but held that this was not, as the traditional rabbis believed, because they weren't trying hard enough; rather, it was because they didn't fully grasp their significance.

For the Kabbalists, such understanding was to be achieved by probing the hidden symbolism present in the sacred texts and in the daily life of every Jew. But no matter how far their eyes strained toward the heavens, Jewish mystics from Biblical times to the present have usually had their feet planted firmly on the ground—a phenomenon partly explained by the fact that Judaism is inextricably bound to the practices of everyday life. By and

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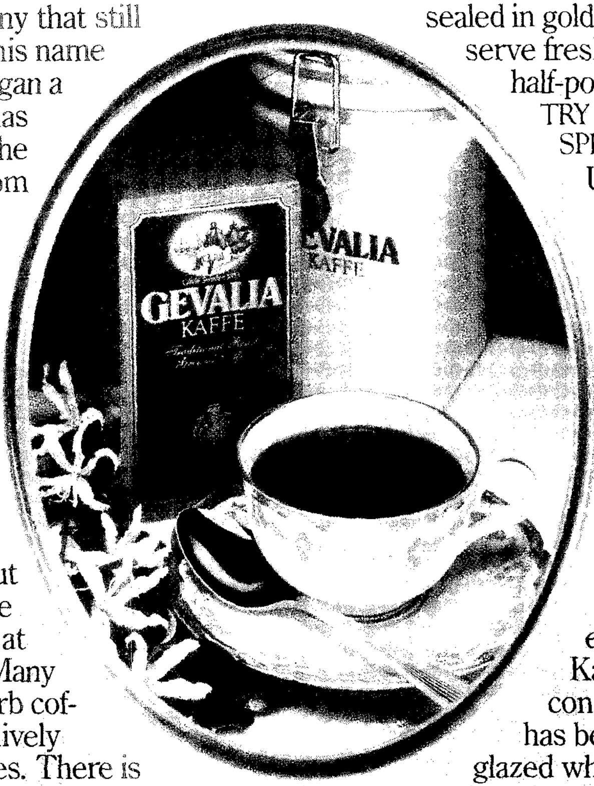

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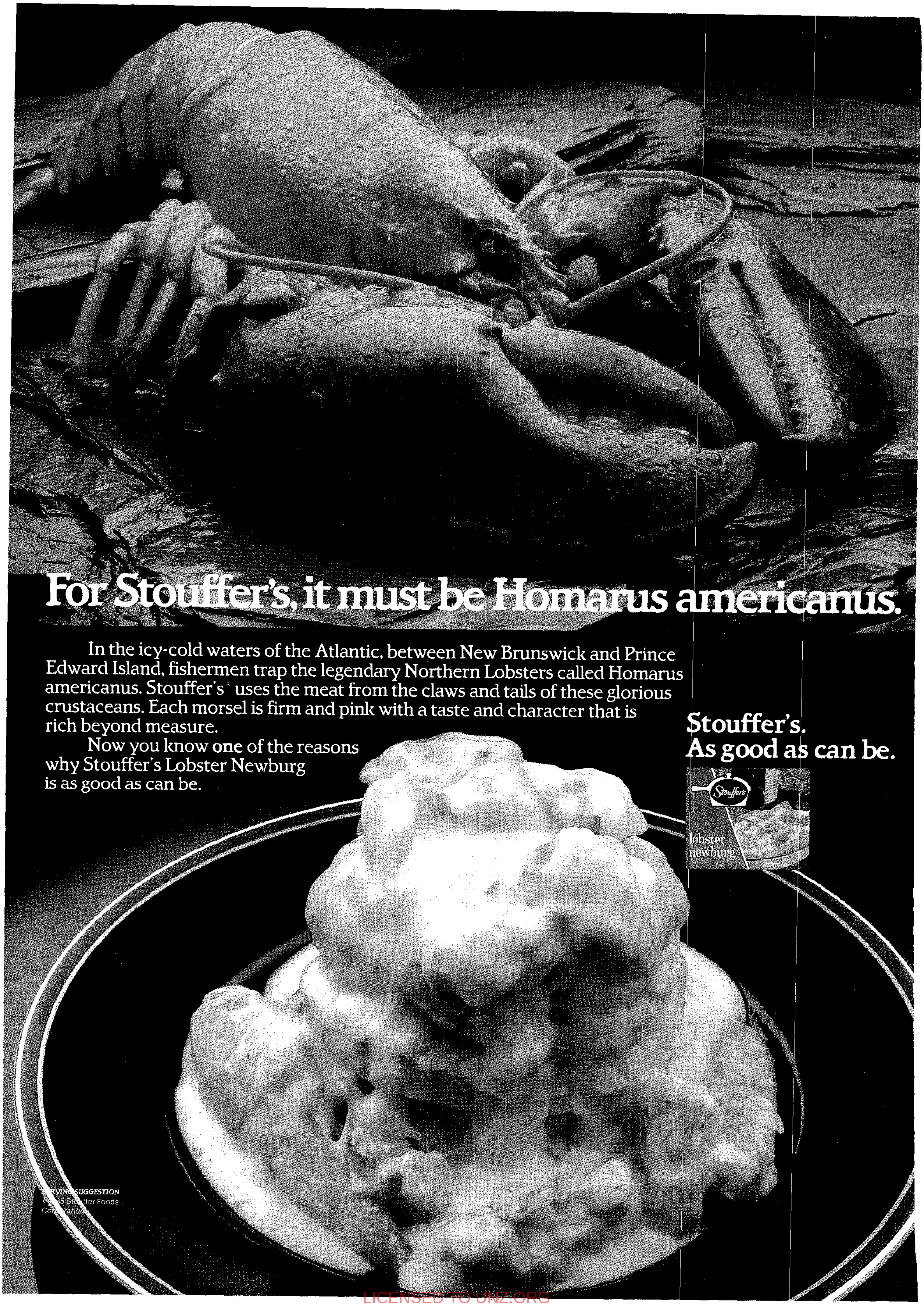

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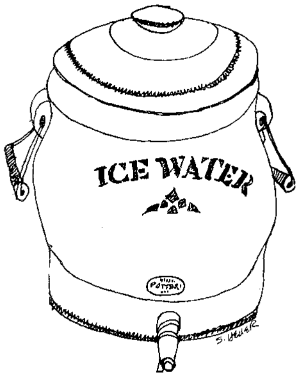
large, they have also been members of communities. Since six hundred thousand souls were privy to the most manifest mystical experience of Judaism, the divine revelation at Mt. Sinai, Jewish mystics have always assumed that even esoteric practices ought not to isolate them from their communities, though "community" might sometimes mean only one or two disciples. The Bible was the star by which they charted a course—through ritual and through withdrawal from sensory vanities and distractions—toward intimacy with God, and all of them shared the belief that the more they repressed their egos, the more they would be like mirrors reflecting the bright image of God.

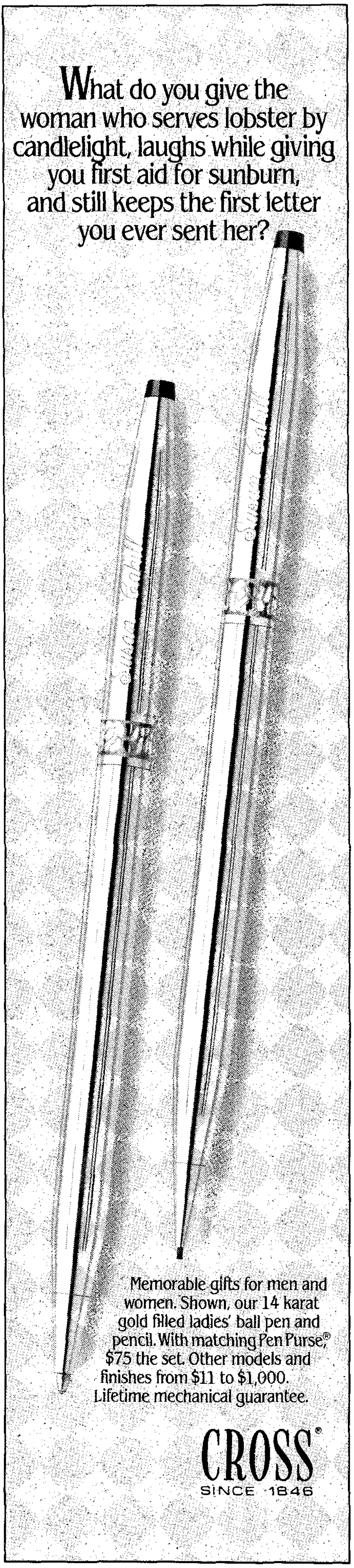
In the earliest phase of Jewish mysticism, from the first century B.C. through the tenth century A.D., its teaching was concerned with the creation of the world, and with pathways to a deeper, usually visionary connection with God. The pursuit of mystical knowledge was considered dangerous for those not spiritually ready for it, and all sorts of restrictions relating to the age, sex (women were excluded), morals, and wisdom of initiates were imposed to prevent hoi polloi from gaining easy access to Kabbalistic circles. Through the ages, Jews have been told about the fate of Ben Azai, Ben Zoma, Ben Abuyah, and Rabbi Akiva—all famous scholars of the second century A.D. who delved where others feared to tread in their pursuit of mystical treasure. Of the four, only Rabbi Akiva emerged unscathed: Ben Azai "gazed and died," Ben Zoma went mad, and Ben Abuyah became an apostate. To protect the uninitiated from similar dangers, mystical knowledge was usually passed down from master to disciple in oral form. When written mystical tracts surfaced, they were generally unintelligible to all but a handful of the Jewish population. Most were descriptions of the dazzling visions the adept might expect to behold and what he might experience at each step of his inner journey. In the early phase of Jewish mysticism, chants, breathing exercises, and fasting were used as tools to ease the initiate away from the outer world, as they are in many Eastern religions.



The second phase of Jewish mysticism was ushered in with the appearance, around 1175, in Provence, of an anonymous work—actually, it was deliberately ascribed to a false author—called the "Book of Brilliance," whose main theme was the elusive divine order that exists in daily life. The "Book of Brilliance" brought Kabbalistic notions to the attention of many of the Jews of France and Spain, and was a kind of guidebook for finding God's glory everywhere. The methods it recommended for achieving a higher state of consciousness included focussing on a spiritual energy that was believed to flow through the body—a technique also used in many Eastern religions, including Kundalini Yoga. But, whatever the resemblance of Jewish mysticism to other religions, it differed from most of them in the way it stressed commentary and interpretation. The literary critic Harold Bloom has pointed out that this is especially curious for "a body of work professedly mystical and speculative," and suggests that "this emphasis upon *interpretation* is finally what distinguishes Kabbalah from nearly every other variety of mysticism or theosophy, East or West."

At about the same time that the "Book of Brilliance" was circulating, the "Book of the Pious" appeared in Germany and was read by many of the Jews of Northern Europe. Although the German Hasidim of the twelfth century were concerned mainly with intricate analyses of the Pentateuch, they were also interested in altered states of consciousness, and they explored such exotica as automatic writing, believing them to be pathways to spiritual knowledge. Unlike his eighteenth-century namesake, the medieval Hasid was an ascetic—a man who was warned against enjoying even the innocent pleasures of keeping birds or spending time with children.

One of the few things everybody agrees about in the realm of Jewish scholarship is that surprisingly little is known about the lives of the great Jewish mystics. The German-born Israeli Judaic scholar Gershom Scholem, who died several years ago, and who was the preëminent student of Jewish mysticism, said of the Kabbalists that they "left us . . . mystical tracts and books from which it is difficult, if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not impossible, to form an impression of their personalities." For example, even the authorship of one of the major books of the Hasidic world—the "Sefer Ha-Zohar," or "Book of Splendor," which Scholem described as a kind of "mystical novel"—has been disputed. The "Zohar," as it is usually called, records the mystical conversations of the second-century Palestinian rabbi Shimon ben Yohai, the most illustrious teacher and leader of his generation, with his son Eleazer and various followers. Most Hasidim still believe that the book was written by Shimon ben Yohai, although Scholem established, after years of research, that it was almost certainly the creation of the thirteenth-century Spanish Kabbalist Moses de León. In contrast to earlier Kabbalistic works, which stress asceticism and personal mystical experiences, the "Zohar" emphasizes, among other things, the interconnectedness of all creation, and while it is by no means an easily accessible book, it is more plainly written than the earlier works.

But no Kabbalist had greater influence on the philosophy of East European Jewry than Isaac Luria (1534-1572), the leader of the Safad school of mysticism. Safad, a city near the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, was an important economic and spiritual center for Jews in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—particularly those who had been exiled from Spain. Although Luria died before he reached forty and wrote no comprehensive description of his theories, his philosophical discourses and his syntheses of earlier Kabbalistic works (he is said, for instance, to have spent eight years reading and absorbing the "Zohar," which, tradition has it, he happened upon by chance) were recorded by a disciple, Chaim Vital, and were eventually transformed into what Scholem called "the true *theologica mystica*" of Judaism.

Luria's intricate and elusive system of thought, it is surely safe to say, would scarcely have become as popular as it did had it not offered, at last, a persuasive explanation for the exile and suffering of the Jews. Chaim Vital's interpretation of his master's teachings is couched in knotty language, and even Scholem's exegesis of them is a bit opaque, but the boldness of Luria's vision is clear. Luria suggested that the reason suffering and evil exist in the world is that not only Jewry but the "Divine Presence" itself is separated from its source. In

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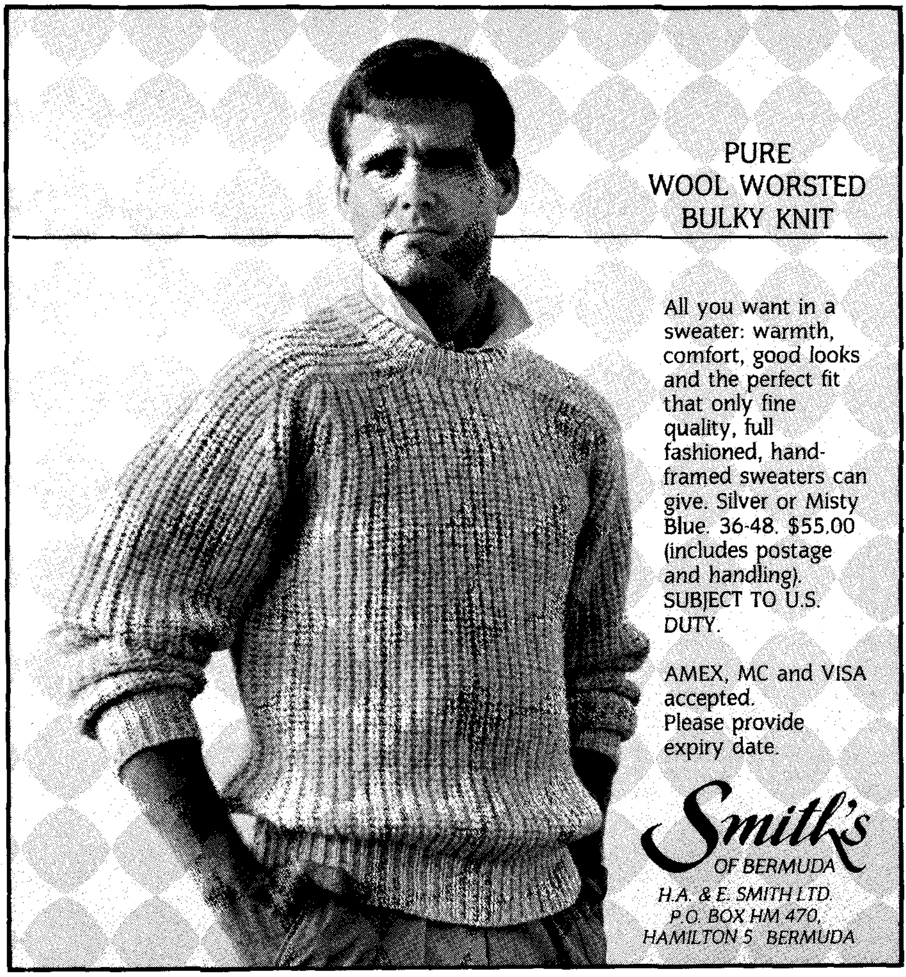

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order to make room for the material world, he said, God breathed in, or imploded, and compressed part of His "Light," whereupon a space opened up—a process that Luria called *tzimtzum*, or concentration and withdrawal—and divine "vessels," or "husks," were filled with the Light. Another result of the *tzimtzum* was the emergence of the ten *sefirot* (*sefirot* is the plural of the Hebrew word *sefirah*, which means, very roughly, "divine attribute," or "energy-essence," although no exact equivalent of the term exists in any other language), which, according to the Kabbalists, represent all the human faculties and all the physical and spiritual dimensions of existence. The earliest mystical work to mention this concept seems to have been the "Book of Brilliance." The *sefirot* have been depicted diagrammatically in many ways, but most frequently in the form of a Tree of Life that has its roots in the heavenly spheres, beyond the grasp of human comprehension. Sometimes the *sefirot* are referred to as God's "garments;" they have also been called "faces," "limbs," "colors," and "names." Whatever name is used for them, they symbolize some outer manifestation of the always hidden God, to whom they are closely bound. The meaning and relevance of this esoteric concept, which is fundamental to all Hasidic belief, have inspired countless meditations by scholars of every generation. Luria's Kabbalistic disciples disagreed about exactly what happened next, but all agreed that it was a cosmic catastrophe—one that to a contemporary reader is oddly evocative of the big-bang theory of modern physics. Unable to withstand the energy of the divine Light, the "husks" shattered, and confusion reigned. Some of the sparks returned to their source. The rest commingled with the shattered husks and fell into every animal, vegetable, and mineral part of the world. It is the task of man, Luria said, to separate "the holy sparks" from the husk, so that the sparks can return to their "roots." All generations have a role to play in this process, until the day when the final *tikkun* ("repair"), or redemption, comes.

One can readily see how the persecuted Jews of Eastern Europe and the descendants of those who had been exiled from Spain drew an analogy between their condition and the ideas expressed by Luria. The Judaic scholar Herbert Weiner, in his

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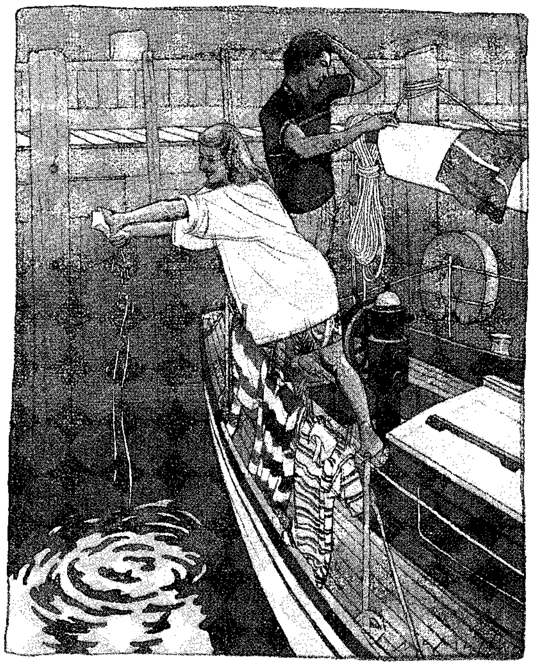
refreshingly lucid "9½ Mystics," observes:

> Since to kabbalists all history is but the outer representation of an inner spiritual process, expulsion from Spain . . . was seen as the outer covering of the real catastrophe that is still taking place in the inner world. The seeming absence of God which the Jews of Spain experienced was analogous to the primal withdrawal of God. Israel is in exile just as God is in exile. But there is a purpose to this scattering of the Jews; they are to go everywhere to gather the sparks and prepare the world for its Great *Tikkun*. The condition of the Jew is, therefore, not the result of an accident and certainly not a challenge to the claims of his ancestral faith. On the contrary, his condition of exile is proof of the cosmic mission which devolves upon every individual Jew and upon the people of Israel as a whole. The world will not be restored or redeemed unless the Jew performs his task.

If Lurianic doctrine gave the Jews of the Diaspora an explanation for their dispersal, it also provided satisfying grounds for performing the *mitzvot*—the six hundred and thirteen commandments. The prime reason, of course, was and always will be that they were God's commandments. But the theory of holy sparks and the *sefirot* and the *tikkun* gave ordinary Jews a sense that carrying out even the most mundane of the commandments—whether it had to do with preparing for the Sabbath or eating kosher food or going to the ritual bath—fulfilled a deeper, cosmic purpose. Curiously, Luria believed that the process of restoration had been nearly completed, and that the final redemption, which would be announced by the appearance of the Messiah, would come soon. He even predicted the year that the Messiah would come: 1648—a cruel irony for the Jews of the Ukraine, since instead of divine salvation 1648 brought them the Khmelnitsky pogroms.

The year 1648 was also when Sabbatai Zevi, a wealthy Turkish Jew and one of the strangest avatars of mysticism in Jewish history, first suggested publicly that *he* was the Messiah. He was born in Smyrna in 1626. Though he was a gifted Talmudic student and a member of the rabbinical élite of Smyrna, his scholarly gifts had already been called into question by his bizarre behavior. For long periods, he avoided people and was subject to deep depressions; at other times, he was wildly garrulous and euphoric. It was undoubtedly during one of these euphoric periods that he declared himself the redeemer of mankind. At the time, and for a while afterward, no one took him very seriously. Those who knew him



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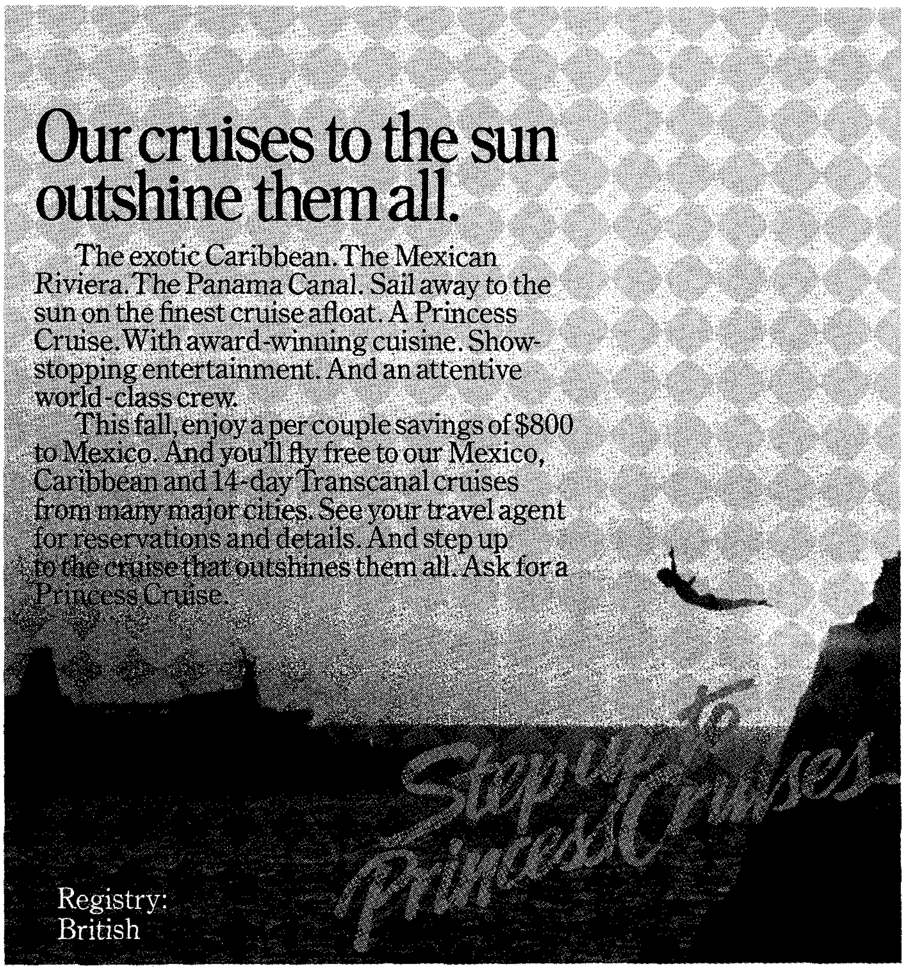

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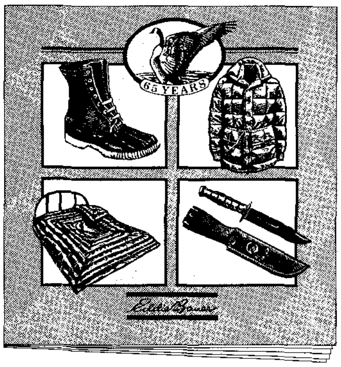

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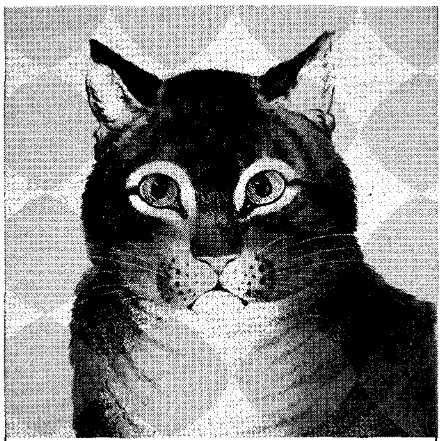
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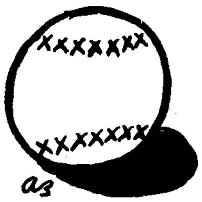
regarded his pronouncement as further evidence that he was a troubled man. He did much to encourage this view: he was divorced from his first two wives without having consummated either marriage, and his third wife was rumored to be a prostitute; he frequently boasted that he had experienced levitation; and he celebrated a ceremonial wedding service beneath a traditional Jewish wedding canopy with the Torah as his bride. For antics of this kind, he was banished from Smyrna in the early sixteen-fifties and from Salonika in 1658 by the local rabbinates. In 1665, when he was living in Cairo, the course of his life was changed; a rabbi of unquestionable probity named Nathan of Gaza declared that he had had an ecstatic vision in which he saw Sabbatai Zevi as the true Messiah. Nathan predicted that the new Messiah, "riding on a lion with a seven-headed dragon in its jaws," would come to restore the world in 1666 (the same year that English millennialists had predicted for the Apocalypse). He declared himself the prophet of the Messiah, and his announcement was followed by seven weeks of frenzied excitement, during which time Sabbatai Zevi frequently rode around Gaza on horseback in regal robes. To underscore his seriousness, he appointed apostles from among his followers, designating them representatives of the tribes of Israel. Word of this startling turn of events spread rapidly by letter and messenger throughout the Jewish world, and a kind of communal hysteria ensued, in which not only the weary, downtrodden masses of Eastern Europe but Jews of all classes and countries joined a mass movement of repentance to prepare for the coming age of redemption. The Encyclopaedia Judaica gives the following account:



> People from the surrounding countries flocked to him to receive individual penance or wrote to him asking him to reveal to them the root of their soul and tell them how to "restore it." Excessive fasts and other ascetic exercises became the order of the day. . . . The first reports that reached Europe were, curiously enough, not about Sabbatai Zevi, but about the appearance of the lost Ten tribes of Israel, who were said to be marching under the command of a prophetic and saintly man of God about whom all sorts of miraculous stories were told. According to some versions they were conquering Mecca, according to others assembling in the Sahara Desert, and in a third version marching into Persia. Rumors of this kind, coming from Morocco, reached Holland, England, and Germany. Detailed reports from many parts of the Diaspora describe the excessive lengths to which the penitents went. Fasts and repeated ritual baths, mortifications which were frequently of an extreme character, and lavish almsgiving were practiced everywhere.

One observer reported that "the ritual bath was so crowded that it was almost impossible to enter there." The Encyclopaedia also notes, "Commerce came to a standstill everywhere. Many sold their houses and property to provide themselves with money for the journey to the Holy Land, while others made no such preparations, being convinced that they would be transported on clouds. . . . Reports from small towns and hamlets in Germany prove that the messianic revival was not limited to the larger centers. From many places delegations left to visit Sabbatai Zevi, bearing parchments signed by the leaders of the community which acknowledged him as the Messiah and king of Israel."

Not everyone was impressed by Sabbatai Zevi's claims, of course. Among the notable skeptics were the rabbis of Jerusalem, who threatened him with excommunication. To avoid this, he returned to Smyrna, where he was received by tumultuous crowds and continued to attract followers from all parts of Europe and North Africa. Then, early in 1666, the year that was to have ushered in the paradisiacal era, he was placed under arrest by the Turkish sultan, who had tolerated him for a while but had finally decided that the moment had come to respond to the social and religious upheaval caused by this eccentric Jew. A short time later, the would-be Messiah was asked to choose between death and the Muslim faith, and, to the horror of hundreds of thousands of his followers, he chose to don the turban, a sign of his conversion to Islam. According to all reports, he then entered upon a luxurious existence, with the honorary title of Sultan's Doorkeeper.

Sabbatai Zevi's apostasy had a devastating effect on Jews throughout the Diaspora, and particularly on those of Eastern Europe. In the region of the Ukraine, which had probably suffered most in the various pogroms, those who had pinned their hopes for a better life on the self-proclaimed Messiah felt betrayed and abandoned. Adding to their confusion was the fact that certain followers of Sabbatai Zevi continued to proclaim his legitimacy.

They argued that his apostasy was only a mask, a forced conversion that was nullified by a "deeper" faith. It did not help matters, either, when another demagogic figure, Jacob Frank, whose followers were rumored to indulge in incestuous sexual orgies, appeared on the scene to revive and reinterpret many of Sabbatai Zevi's ideas. (Frank, too, became an apostate—to Catholicism.) The result of all the furor was to make most Jewish community leaders profoundly conservative and suspicious of any innovation. Ordinary Jews were told to obey the commandments and leave deeper matters—especially mystical ones—to the scholars who had the training and knowledge to pursue them. Thus, a schism developed between the bulk of the Jews—now largely ragtag, leaderless, poor, and uneducated—and the few well-to-do rabbis and scholars who had the time to study.

THE founder of modern Hasidism, Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, who is generally credited with arousing East European Jews from their spiritual torpor, was born in the Ukrainian province of Podolia in 1698. In Hasidic circles, he is usually referred to as the Besht—an acronym of Baal Shem Tov, which means Master of the Good Name. (The *baalei shem* were itinerant healers and wonder-workers who, because of their Kabbalistic knowledge of the secret mystical names of God and their possession of various amulets, were believed to be able to cure people and exorcise demons.) At least part of the Besht's holiness was said to be inherited: according to Hasidic legend, his soul was an incarnation of a spark from the soul of the supposed author of the "Zohar," Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai. The Besht was the polar opposite not only of the spiritual leaders of his era but of most of the trailblazers of Jewish history. Nearly all the great spiritual Jewish leaders and Hasidic masters have a common biography: they were precocious in their studies—sober, serious young people, who evinced no great interest in the ordinary pursuits of childhood and at an early age became the shining light of an intimate circle of enthralled elders. As adults, they dazzled those around them with their erudition and intellectual brilliance. The Besht had none of these attributes. He was poor, given to wandering around in the woods when he was supposed to be studying, and in his early life chose to hide his true

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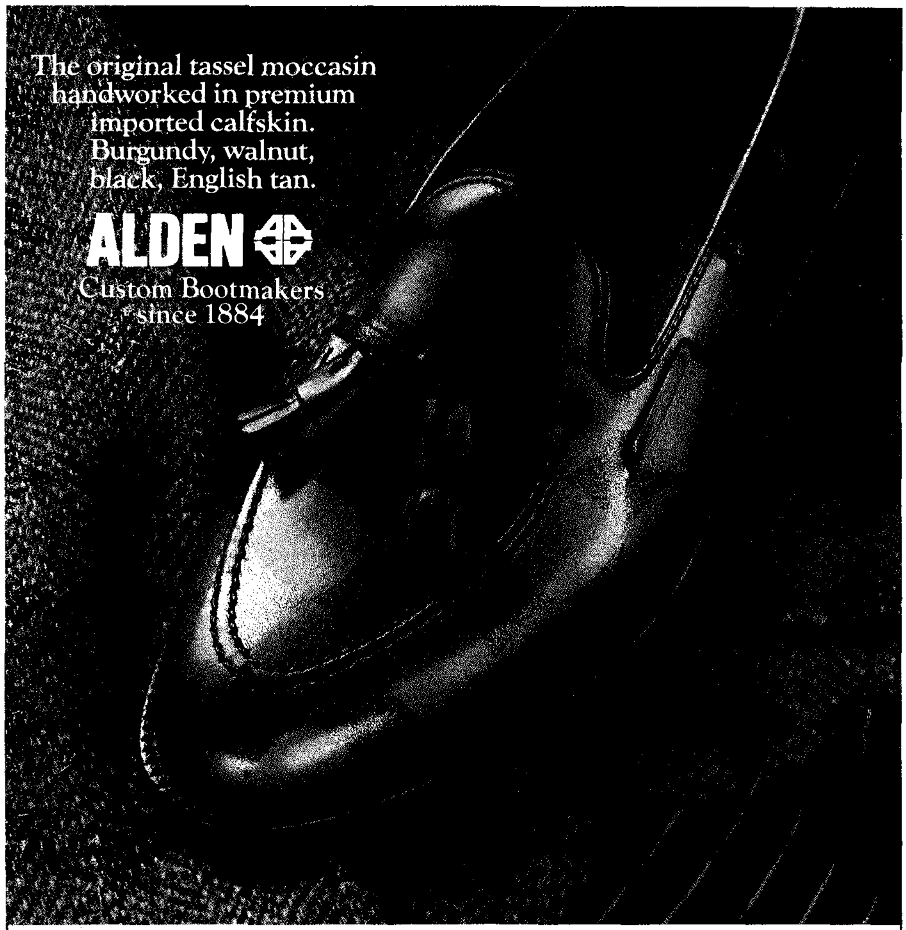

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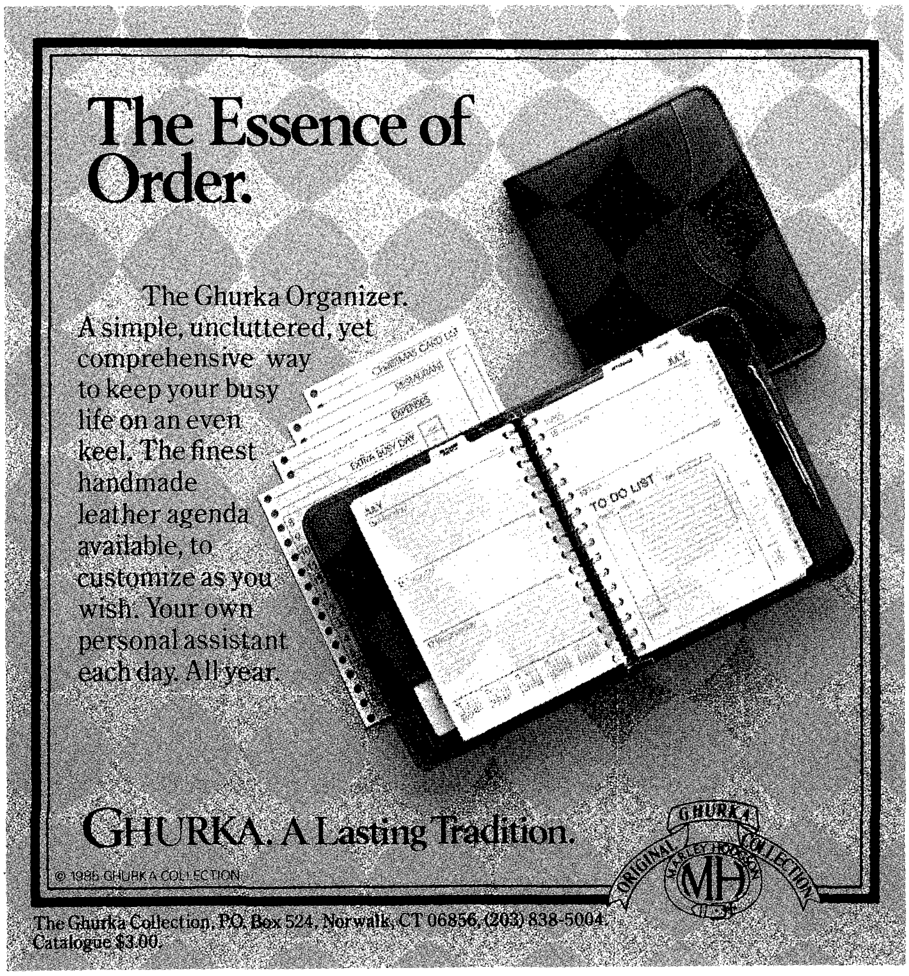

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nature behind a mask of doltishness. However, when he finally began to preach his message, in his mid-thirties, it was not long before he found a grateful and ardent following.

The Besht's teachings, which form the core of all Hasidic belief, emphasized the mystical presence of God in all things and had as a goal the infusion of holiness and joy into all aspects of life—eating, praying, lovemaking, social intercourse. For decades, the rabbinical scholar lost in the minutiae of the Law, or the reclusive mystic steeped in secret Kabbalistic lore, had been out of touch with most ordinary Jews—and, for that matter, with educated Jews who yearned for a revitalization of their devotion. Small wonder, then, that before the end of the eighteenth century more than half the Jews of Europe closed ranks behind the Besht and his followers, who not only brought Kabbalistic mysteries (especially the Lurianic Kabbalah) to light in a comprehensible form but—of equal importance—regarded themselves as community leaders, as had the rabbis of old.

Like many of his predecessors, the Besht wrote down none of his ideas. (One is struck time and again by this preference for anonymity among Jewish mystics. They seem content to allow their collective wisdom to flow from one generation to the next unencumbered by the flotsam of personal glory.) His disciples did, but no real biography of him exists. A semi-cohesive account of his life does, however, appear in a book called "In Praise of the Besht," a compilation of Hasidic tales, written by his scribe's son-in-law, which did not surface until 1814, fifty-four years after the Besht's death. Two slightly different pictures of the Besht emerge in the book: one by the author, the other by the printer, who apparently could not resist adding his own version of the facts in a preface. The author focusses on the Besht's wonder-workings, while the printer offers a rather more conventional, earthbound version of his life and gives greater emphasis to his hidden saintliness. He tells us that the Besht was born when his parents were quite old, and that his father died soon afterward; that his community sent him to study with a local teacher but that he was frequently absent and preferred sitting alone in the woods to attending school; that later on he became a teacher's assistant and took the children to and from school; that he had a beautiful voice; that he became a beadle at the local study house, where he studied in secret all night and slept all day, so that people thought him lazy; that his first wife died shortly after they were married; that his second wife's father knew he was a holy man but that his brother-in-law considered him a simpleton and urged his sister to get a divorce; and that eventually he and his wife went to the country, where he quarried clay, regularly secluded himself, and fasted.

In 1734, after seven years of this ascetic life, the Besht returned to his wife's village, and soon afterward he "put aside his mask" and began to teach. Little else of a nonlegendary nature is known about him. Hundreds of Hasidic tales about his life have been passed along, however, testifying to his clairvoyance, his compassion, his ability to perform miracles and exorcise dybbuks, his ability to solve problems that had confounded the wisest scholars, and his mystical powers, which included being able to rise to the heavens. Many of the stories emphasize the Besht's concern that religion be vital and alive. "Not," as it says in Deuteronomy, "in the heavens. . . . Neither is it beyond the sea . . . [but] very close to you."

The Besht travelled a good deal to distant towns and villages, and word seems to have spread rapidly among the hamlets of Eastern Europe that according to his teachings no one need ever again feel left out in the spiritual cold. Even the poor shepherd who mumbled incoherently when his heart was full of love for God was heard; more, his sincerity probably made a greater impression in Heaven than the dry supplications of the scholar who recited his prayers by rote. Before long, impressive numbers of Jews began to leave their villages' congregations and ritually ordained rabbis to follow the Besht and his disciples, the *tzaddikim* ("righteous men"). The reputation of the Besht and his followers as pious men who could use mystical techniques to heal, bless, comfort, and enlighten every Jew eventually earned them the name Hasidim. Unfortunately, it also aroused the hostility of the established rabbinical leaders, who suspected that the Hasidim were ill-intentioned gadflies, if not heretics. But, as Gershom Scholem and others have pointed out, there was nothing heretical about them. The Besht and his followers never rejected a single tenet of orthodoxy. In "Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism," Scholem, citing

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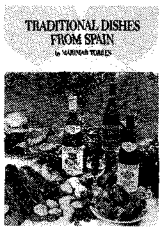

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the British scholar Evelyn Underhill, observes, "The prevailing conception of the mystic as a religious anarchist who owes no allegiance to his religion finds little support in fact. History rather shows that the great mystics were faithful adherents of the great religions." Many of the conservative enemies of the Hasidim were also mystics; it was not the Hasidim's mysticism that they objected to but what they regarded as their free and easy dispensation of it. The Hasidim had introduced certain innovations, such as permitting the hours of prayer to vary, so that people could pray in less of a hurry and (it was hoped) with more feeling; eliminating the cantor, long a fixture of synagogue life, from the service, so that any pious man could lead it; and declaring that dancing and singing were appropriate ways to express religious enthusiasm. "Our Father in Heaven hates sadness and rejoices when His children are joyful," the Besht said. To be sure, there was plenty of solemnity left in Hasidic praying, but now intensity of feeling and spontaneity were valued. The singing and dancing that played such a central role in Hasidic gatherings served not only as a sociologically unifying force but as a mystical rite of passage.

The Besht and his followers were not the first Jews to sing and dance their way closer to God. Isaac Luria and his circle had often sung and danced outdoors when they were performing their rituals, and one of the members of that circle, Israel ben Moses Najara (1542-1619), adapted many Arabic, Greek, Turkish, and Spanish melodies to fit Hebrew and Aramaic texts. (Najara's songs were eventually carried to all parts of the Jewish world and became a part of everyday synagogue life.) But the Besht and his followers gave singing and dancing a higher spiritual status than they had ever enjoyed before, and convinced great numbers of Jews of music's unique power to transport them quickly from the mundane and oppressive realities of their lives to realms of ecstasy and joy. The Hasidim also adopted a prayer book, based on the teachings of Luria, that differed from the one generally in use in its order of prayers, in its omission or inclusion of various liturgical hymns, and in some textual phraseology; they made slight changes in the methods of slaughtering cattle, permitting the use of a honed steel knife instead of the traditional iron one; and

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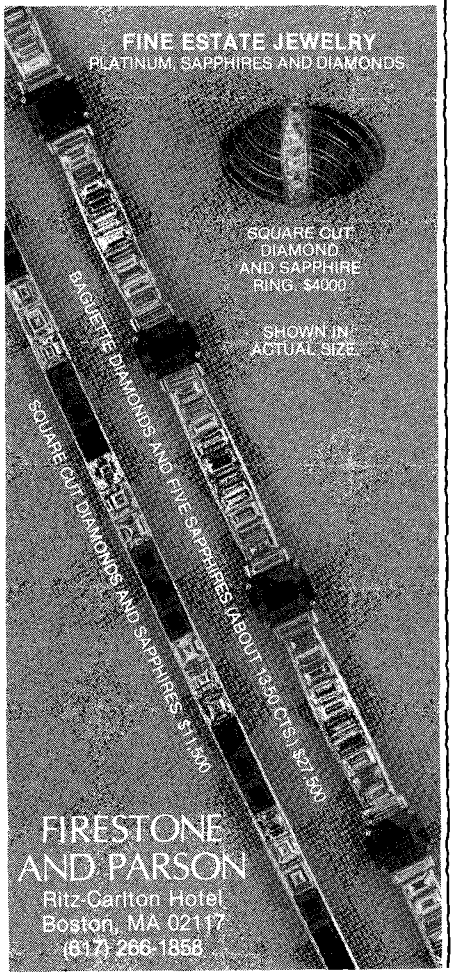

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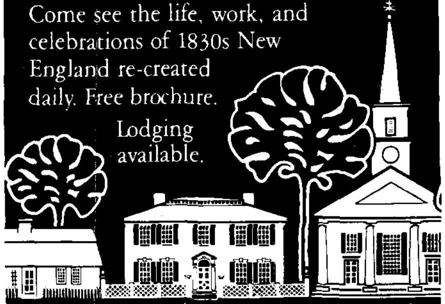

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they dressed in white on the Sabbath. It was not unusual to see the Besht and his followers assembled in the woods or meadows, or gathered companionably around a table. (The openness of these gatherings went far to allay suspicions that the Hasidim were heretics; since their meetings were open to all for scrutiny, they surely had nothing to hide.) There was no formal preaching, no discourse delivered from a pulpit. The Besht preached in stories, anecdotes, aphorisms, and parables—the chief teaching method practiced by Hasidim today. Unlike the followers of Sabbatai Zevi, whose spiritual energy was directed outward, toward the person of their would-be savior, the Besht's followers were urged to turn their focus inward; the joyous dancing and singing, the vigorous, rocking style of prayer, and the shouting of endearments to the Deity in the course of a service—all of which became the earmarks of Hasidic worship—were only the overflow of excited religious feeling. Nonetheless, these peculiarities and the growing number of defectors to the movement did little to recommend the Hasidim to the conservative rabbis—especially those whose memories of their elders' tales about Sabbatai Zevi were still fresh. It did not take long for this sector of the religious hierarchy, who came to be known as *mitnagdim*, or "opponents," to declare that the Besht and his followers were threatening the heart of orthodoxy with their denigration of Talmudic study and vulgarization of worship. The rabbinic establishment regarded the Besht's un-Jewish-sounding emphasis on joy with no little consternation, and believed that his elevation of the simple man to a place in the social and religious hierarchy equal to the Talmud scholar's threatened the Jewish community with anarchy. How were local authorities going to admonish their unlettered flocks to follow every nicety of the Law when the Besht assured them that it was their purity of heart and the spirit of their devotion that mattered, not their ability to memorize tractates? In 1755, the new "sect" (a word that was understood to link the Hasidim to Sabbatianism) was denounced, and two years later the rabbinates of the cities of Slutzk, Vilna, and Shklov placed a ban on the Besht and his teachings. This ban, and others that followed, proved to be as effective in halting the growth of the Hasidic movement as a fisherman's

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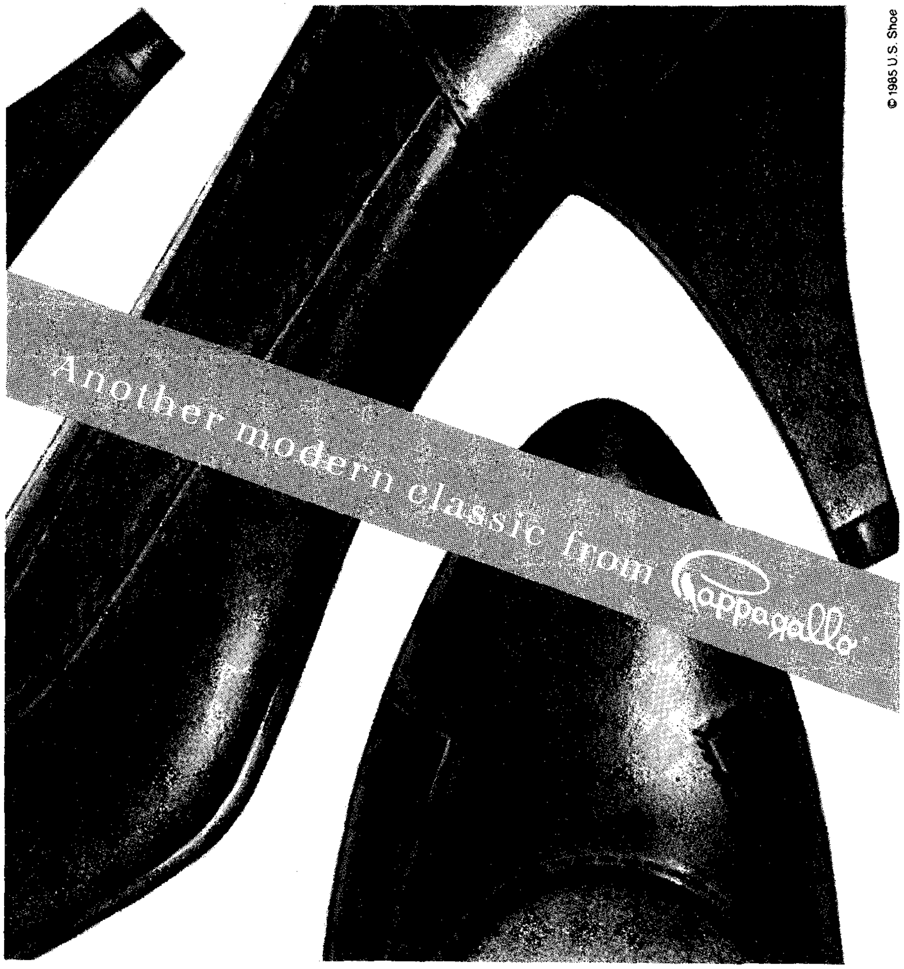

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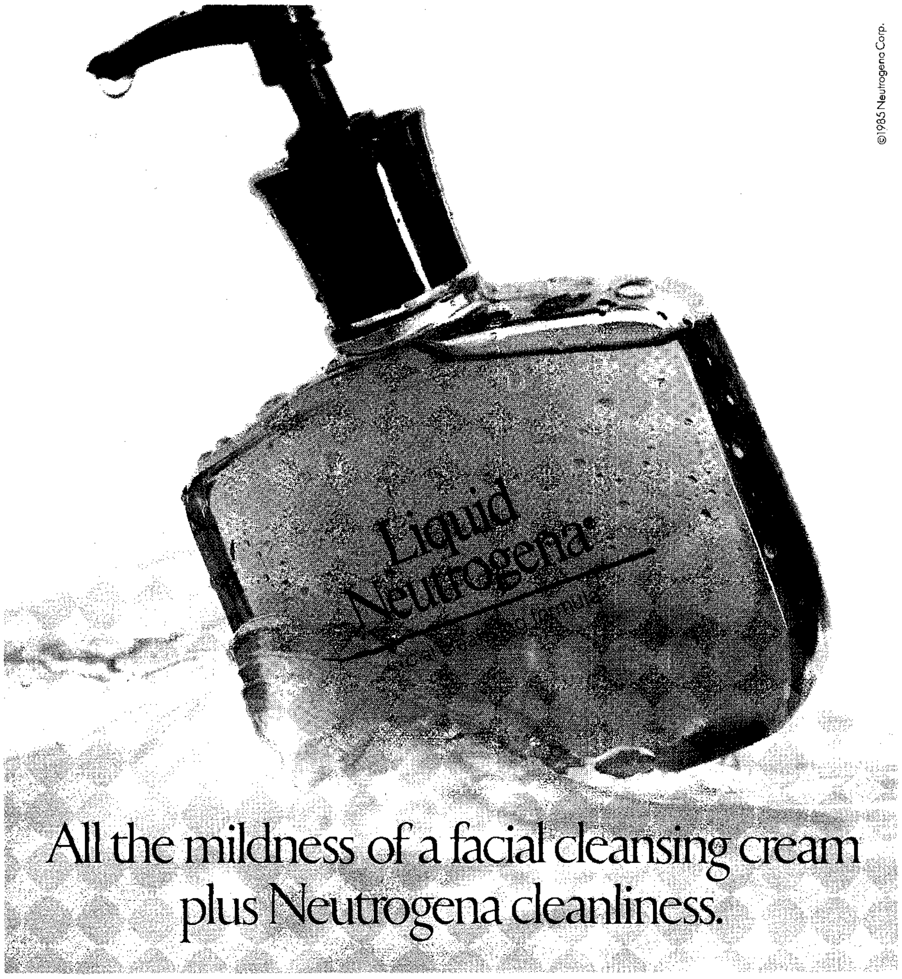
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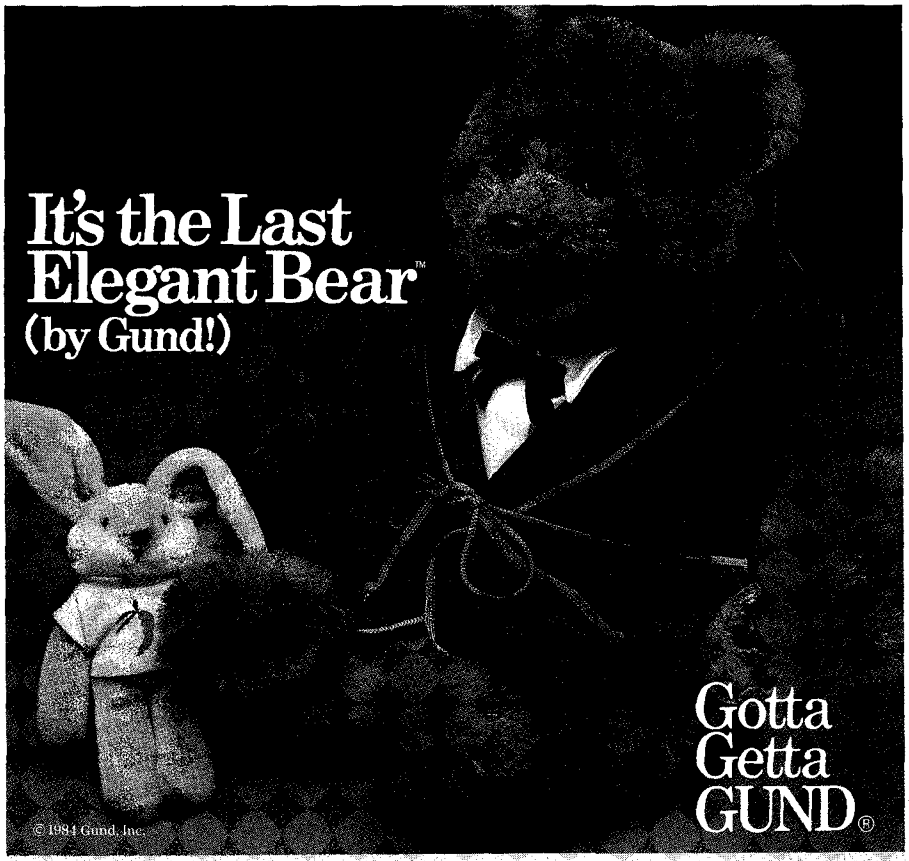

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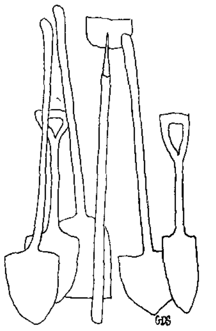
IT is one of the curious twists of history that the Hasidim, once considered the enemies of orthodoxy, today consider themselves its bulwark. Besieged from every direction by what they perceive as a decadent, morally bankrupt civilization, they shun its preoccupations, rebel against many of its social conventions, spend as much time as possible in their neighborhood fortresses, and devote themselves to perpetuating the ideals of Jewish religious life. This is especially evident on the eve of the Sabbath. To wander along Kingston Avenue, where the Lubavitchers do most of their marketing, as I did one Friday afternoon after my first visit to the Konigsbergs, is to enter a world whose rhythms are dictated solely by religious custom and ritual. Like most of her neighbors, Sheina had completed some of her Sabbath preparations the night before, but she still had some last-minute shopping to do, and invited me to accompany her. She was in a good mood.

"I live from one *Shabbos* to the next," she said. "I look forward to it all week. We almost always have three or four guests. Sometimes they're neighborhood friends, at other times they're just family, but we're often asked by some official to provide a congenial *Shabbos* for someone who is travelling, or for students who have no other place to go. In the last month, we've had people show up from England, Iran, and South Africa. The door is never closed. It's totally unlike what I was used to when I was growing up in Bloomfield Hills. Saturdays were a drag when I was a child. I didn't really understand what the Sabbath was about. No one ever talked about it. We observed it only in a halfhearted way, and neither my brothers nor my sister and I ever really understood why we were doing any of it. In fact, I hardly understood anything about the deeper levels of Judaism until I became a *baalat teshuvah*."

Baalat teshuvah is a Hebrew phrase meaning "one who has returned." No one knows exactly how many *baalei teshuvah* there are, but in recent years a surprisingly large number of Jews have "returned" to Orthodox ways, and each year hundreds of them join the Lubavitcher world. Some have been sought out; unlike other Hasidim, the Lubavitchers are unabashedly committed to bringing as many Jews as possible back into the fold. Some, like Sheina, have found their own way.

"What was life like in Michigan?"

"It was like life everywhere else—aimless. It would probably be hard to find a community whose values were more different from those of a Hasidic community than the one I grew up in. Most of the people I knew were fairly well-to-do and self-absorbed. They never really gave two thoughts to their spiritual life."



In a corner fruit store, Sheina handed a short shopping list to a pale, dark-haired man in a yarmulke, and he filled a bag with fruits and vegetables as we talked. There were three other women in the store. All of them knew Sheina and came over to chat. Across the street, a Glatt Kosher Dairy Cafeteria (*glatt* means "smooth;" originally it referred to the lining of an animal's lung, which was not considered kosher if it was wrinkled, but the word has come to mean "assiduous") had signs in the window advertising cold borscht, mushroom-barley soup, and noodle pudding. A dark, tiny store nearby called Benny's of Boro Park offered women's clothing.

The general store down the block, where Sheina stopped next, was piled high with cartons. Customers sidled around the boxes and each other, flattening themselves to avoid physical contact and generally acting like contortionists as they strained to reach boxes of Landau's Puffed Wheat, jars of Rokeach Gefilte Fish, and cans of Season Sardines. Containers of Shefa kosher milk filled the refrigerator cases. All the canned goods and cartons were marked with a Ⓤ (for Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America) or other symbols signifying that the product had been approved as kosher by a rabbinical board. No Hasid will buy any prepared food that does not bear such a stamp of rabbinical approval, and one supervising rabbi may be deemed more trustworthy than another. Little knots of Hasidim stood about talking, gesticulating, laughing, arguing—creating complex roadblocks. Shopping definitely played second fiddle here to conversation, most of it in Yiddish, some of it in English. No one passed Sheina (whose command of Yiddish, she confided to me somewhat ruefully, was tenuous) without at least a nod or, more often, an "Ah, Sheina, how are you?"—to which she invariably replied, "*Baruch ha'Shem*, fine. And you?" There were many Yiddish accents, and much of the English spoken reflected Yiddish syntax. For example, almost everybody used the word "by" for "at," as in "I was staying by Sarah last week." Except for the thin veneer of modernity represented by the refrigeration, the plastic food wrappings, and the fashionable clothes of the women, the store seemed to have been freshly transported to Brooklyn from Sholem Aleichem's Kaserilevke.

We nearly made it to Raskin's fish store, across the street, without pausing to talk with anyone, but at the entrance a gray-bearded man stopped Sheina to ask her how two Iranian girls he'd sent over to her were doing. Sheina explained to me that more than nine hundred Iranian Jewish children had been sent to America by their parents, who feared for the children's lives because of the political unrest in that country. Almost all of them were taken in by Lubavitcher families, who were doing their best to cope with communication problems (few of the children spoke anything but Farsi) and with the characteristically tepid religious background of their charges. Although the children were grateful for the Lubavitchers' help, most had shown little interest in pursuing a more religious life. The man who stopped Sheina was in charge of the Iranian project. She told him that the girls were doing fine. "They keep to themselves a lot, but they try to enter into our customs as best they can," she said. One of the chief characteristics that distinguish Lubavitchers from other Hasidim is their Jewish social consciousness. Helping Jews of every stripe has traditionally been a Lubavitcher preoccupation.

In Raskin's fish store, the clerks, all in yarmulkes, joked a lot with their customers. The fish were piled in huge heaps, and the atmosphere was that of an Oriental bazaar. Most of the women had made gefilte fish—the traditional Sabbath food—the night before, but for those who hadn't had the time or the inclination Raskin's sold its own gefilte fish, frozen. (I saw no one buying less than five pounds of fish. In my neighborhood in Manhattan, at least half the late-Friday-afternoon customers are young working women buying modest provisions for dinner with their boyfriends—two

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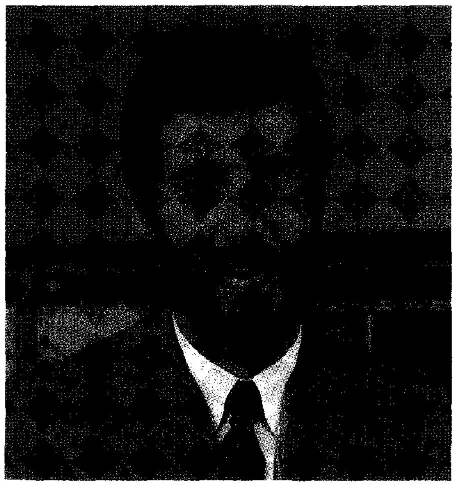

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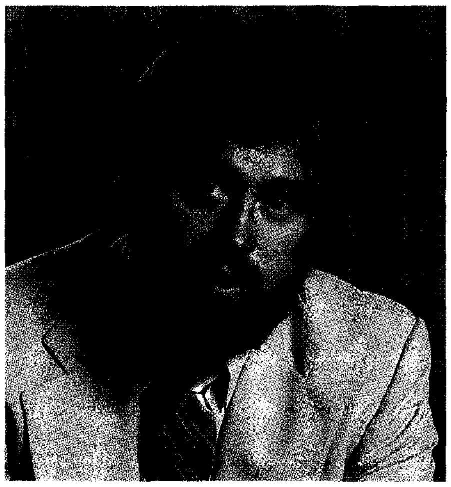

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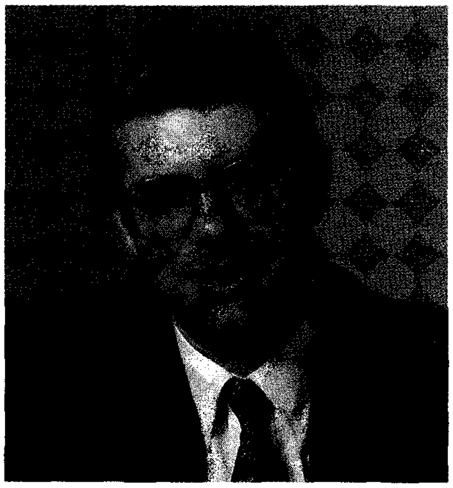

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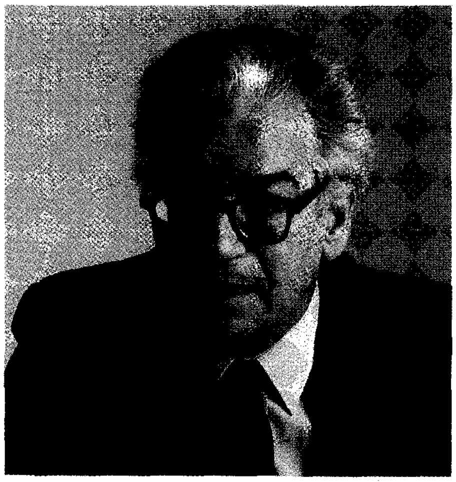

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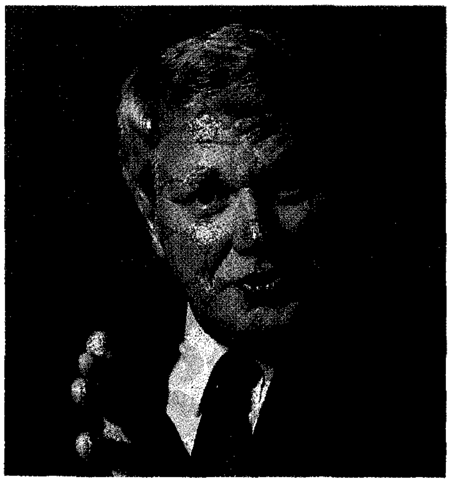

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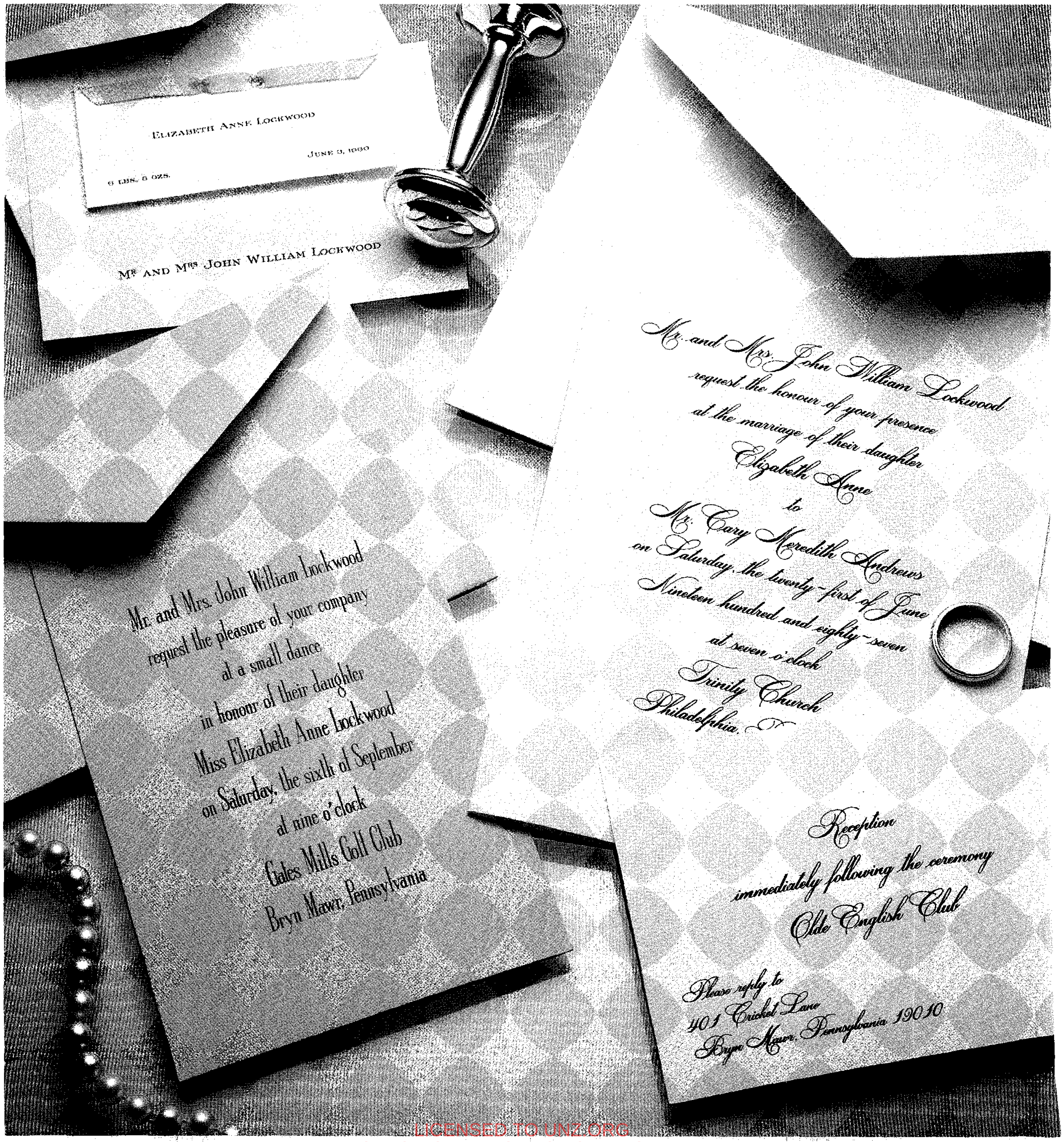

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Mr. and Mrs. John William Lockwood
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in honour of their daughter
Miss Elizabeth Anne Lockwood
on Saturday, the sixth of September
at nine o'clock
Gates Mills Golf Club
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

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request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Elizabeth Anne
to
Mr. Cary Meredith Andrews
on Saturday, the twenty-first of June
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Philadelphia.

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artichokes, two fillets of something, two candles. Obviously, no intimate *soupers à deux* were being planned here.) Leviticus and Deuteronomy list the quadrupeds, fish, and fowl that are considered kosher, or fit to be eaten by Jews. Only those sea creatures which have both fins and scales are kosher, so no lobster, clam, oyster, crab, or shrimp is ever seen in a kosher fish store. Other foods that are proscribed by Jewish law are meat from animals that do not both chew the cud and have cloven hooves; twenty-four kinds of birds (many of them birds of prey); most insects; amphibians; any creature that crawls "upon the belly;" any "winged swarming thing," except for the locust, the cricket, and the grasshopper; any rodent, or lizard; and any product that comes from these creatures, such as milk, eggs, or oil. Among the creatures that fall into one or another of the forbidden categories are pigs, camels, herons, storks, hawks, ravens, pelicans, ostriches, eels, snails, rattlesnakes, ants, and rock badgers. Animals that are considered clean are cows, sheep, goats, deer, chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks, and doves.

Eating kosher food and meat from animals that have been slaughtered in the ritually prescribed manner is one of the basic disciplines of Jewish religious life. Reform Jews, who believe that the dietary laws are antiquated and serve no practical function, point out that they are a major factor in separating Jews from their fellowmen. But the Hasidim are opposed to joining the mainstream, and, citing the Scriptures, point out that God never intended that they should: "I am the Lord your God who have set you apart from the nations. You shall therefore separate between the clean beast and the unclean beast and the unclean fowl and the clean." If the Hasidim's habits and customs alienate other people, they are unconcerned. They accept being exotic as part of their role; in fact, it is a source of pride. As one religious author put it, "what narrower minds look upon as a picayune concern with trifling kitchen matters is really an example of how Judaism elevates the mere physical satisfactions of one's appetite into a spiritual act by its emphasis on the ever-present God and our duty to serve Him at all times." In Orthodox homes, so much ritual is associated with eating that it sometimes seems that the table is a form of altar. A Talmudic scholar who is mentioned in a curious tome I came across—one of many such every-

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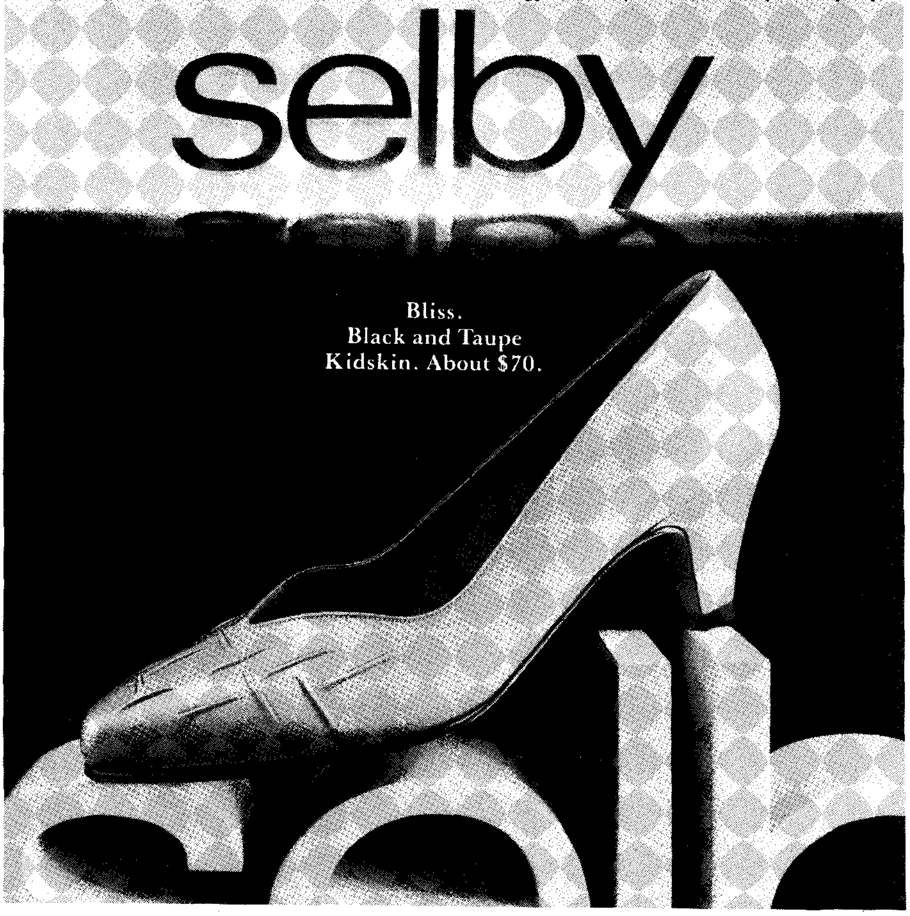

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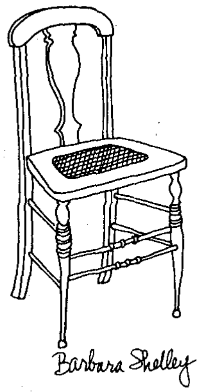
thing-you-wanted-to-know-about-Judaism-but-were-afraid-to-ask books that have recently become popular as part of the booming spiritual-affirmation business—called “To Be a Jew,” by Rabbi Hayim H. Donin, went as far as to suggest that the table has replaced the altar: “When the Temple stood, sacrifices would secure atonement for an individual; now his table does.”

By midafternoon on Friday, the streets of Crown Heights are filled with women laden with shopping bags, hurrying home to finish their Sabbath preparations. By late afternoon, the women have all disappeared, and the landscape has become entirely masculine. As the shadows lengthen under the graceful maples and lindens of President Street, dark-hatted men in sombre clothes, alone or in groups of two or three, are taking pains to reach home before sundown, when the Sabbath begins. Many of the men work half days on Fridays; others leave work in midafternoon. If an employer will not permit an early departure on Friday, a Hasid will not work for him. On Friday afternoon, the men visit the *mikvah*—the ritual bath—to purify themselves for the Sabbath. Many of them exchange their business suits and fedoras for knee-length black silk caftans and velvet yarmulkes. Crowds of men mill outside 770 Eastern Parkway. The look of boredom or patient endurance that one sees so often on their faces in the workaday world has vanished. Their expressions are lively, and the talk is animated. It is a pleasing scene—a *tableau vivant* that cannot have looked much different two hundred years ago.



Few of these men have attended college. In the Hasidic world, secular education has traditionally been viewed as a threat to religious life. During the past decades, this view has changed in certain Orthodox communities. There has developed what the sociologist Egon Mayer, in a study of the Borough Park religious community, described as a dual status system. Upwardly mobile young men and women have tried (helped by laws protecting them from religious discrimination) to achieve distinction in secular careers while satisfying the demands of a religious life. In these communities, being a good doctor or lawyer has come to mean as much as being a good Jew. This change has not occurred in Crown Heights; there are few professional men in the crowd in front of the synagogue. The conspicuous lack of interest in careers which the anthropologist Jerome R. Mintz observed among Hasidim in the nineteen-sixties and wrote about in “Legends of the Hasidim”—a study of Hasidic life based on modern Hasidic tales—still prevails among the Lubavitchers of the nineteen-eighties. Some of them, like the Konigsbergs, appear to make a good living despite this handicap, but many do not. “A Hasid does not have a ‘career;’ he is concerned simply with earning a living in a way which will not interfere with his religious duties,” Mintz wrote. “Most Hasidim . . . belong to the ranks of skilled workers. They are employed in the diamond center as cutters, polishers, and dealers; they hold jobs as sewing-machine operators, pattern cutters, watchmakers, linotype operators, electricians, carpenters, and upholsterers. . . . A small but ever increasing number have established small packaging and wholesale businesses, often in response to the particular needs of the Hasidic community. Because of their disdain for what they consider inadequate precautions in fulfilling the ritual law, a number of Hasidim have succeeded in establishing enterprises concerned with matseh, meat, milk, cheese, bread, noodles, salt, sugar, mayonnaise, and vitamins. Hasidic manufacturers and wholesalers can assure their customers that no condition will be permitted which might render their products impure. Still other concerns supply religious books and other articles. . . . A number of Hasidim have become ritual slaughterers or have opened highly successful retail butcher shops. Some have opened groceries, vegetable markets, fish stores, dry goods stores. . . . These retail ventures are assured of a measure of success because of the customary endorsement of their Rebbe and the patronage of their own courts.”

AT the Konigsberg house, twenty-five minutes before sundown, Sheina, dressed in an elegant tan silk blouse and a tweed skirt, was preparing to light the Sabbath candles. Her afternoon coiffure of short, feathery Titian curls had been transformed into a long, svelte pageboy in the few min-

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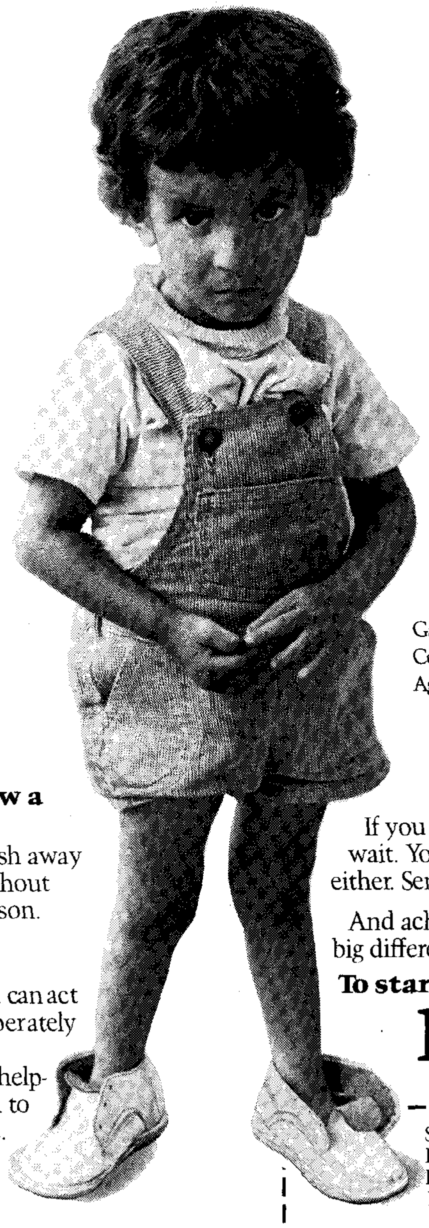

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Colombia
Age 4

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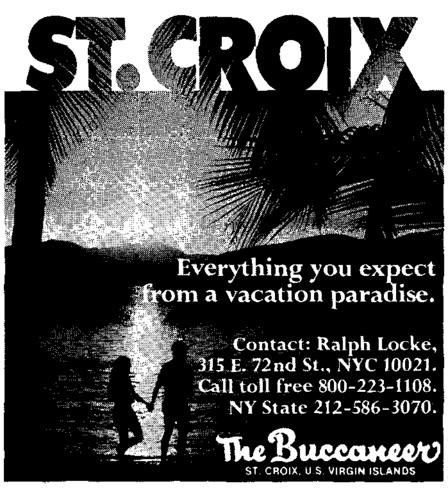
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utes it took her to change upstairs. (I briefly entertained the idea that I might have encountered my first Kabbalistic wonder, then recollected that, for reasons of modesty, married Hasidic women cut off most of their hair and wear wigs. Sheina had merely changed her wig.) According to custom, Sabbath candles are lit twenty minutes before sundown. The meal had been cooked, the table elaborately set, and the heavy, ornately wrought silver candelabrum polished, and the family and guests were gathered in the living room. The guests included a rabbi from South Africa, his wife, and their two daughters; Moshe's second-oldest daughter, Chanah, who was pregnant, and her husband, Isaac, a small, red-headed man with intelligent, laughing eyes, who told me that they were about to depart for Norfolk, Virginia, to "help organize the Jewish community there;" the two almond-eyed Iranian girls, Gita and Azita; and a young girl who had recently decided to abandon her secular life and live in a dormitory that the Lubavitchers run for young *baalot teshuvah.*

Several minutes after the guests had been introduced to one another, the women crowded around the candelabrum. The lighting of the Sabbath candles is the obligation of married women. At least two candles are lit, representing the commandment to "remember" the Sabbath and the injunction in Deuteronomy 5:12 to "observe" it, but Sheina also lit candles for her children, and so did the visiting rabbi's wife. Sheina handed me several candles and invited me to repeat the blessing for lighting the candles after her, and I did so somewhat awkwardly. I had never done it before. When I was young, I had seen my grandmother, a plump, rosy Austrian beauty, light Sabbath candles once or twice. But my mother, an adamantly modern soul who thought such rituals belonged in the same category as curtsying or child labor, put the traditions of four thousand years behind her without a backward glance. Now, watching the peaceful, absorbed faces of the women in the glow of the candles, I felt a rush of nostalgia and something like a sense of loss. It passed quickly, however, when I realized that because of the prohibition against using the phone on the Sabbath I would be unable to call my son to wish him good night.

The number and variety of activities proscribed on the Sabbath, either by the Bible or by post-Biblical decree, seem mind-boggling to outsiders. They include cooking, baking, doing laundry, knitting, crocheting, sewing, embroidering, pasting, drawing, painting, writing, typing, fishing, hunting, chopping wood, cutting hair (or cutting anything else, except food), building or repairing anything, gardening, carrying or pushing anything farther than six feet in public, riding in cars, planes, trains, or buses, boating, buying or selling, horseback riding, playing a musical instrument, switching on any electrical apparatus, such as a television set, phonograph, or radio, handling any objects whose use is forbidden on the Sabbath, such as money, tools, or pencils, exercising or taking part in any sport, or travelling more than a short distance, even on foot. I asked Sheina how she felt about having her activities restricted each week. Surveying the dinner table approvingly as the men filed out the front door to go to their evening service, she replied that she didn't think of it that way. "I feel that I'm getting a break," she said, setting a heavy pitcher of water on the table. "Once you get some of the more complicated things out of the way, like cooking the food in advance and setting a large urn of hot water on a metal cover over a low burner, so that everybody can have coffee and tea to drink on Saturday, and covering some of the light switches so that no one will accidentally turn the important lights off, it feels more like a holiday. What if you were flown to a quiet tropical island every week? Wouldn't you be pleased if you were permitted—even obliged—to put aside your everyday burdens and chores? I don't really know what other people's lives are like, but I doubt if most families get the chance we do just to sit around and talk to each other every weekend. Most Americans seem to play on weekends as hard as they work the rest of the week. The Sabbath is also a time when I can study Torah in an unhurried way, and we almost always have guests who have interesting things to say about life."

"You mean Jewish life, of course."

"Well, yes."

"Are your guests ever Gentiles?"

"No. I'm aware that there are some fine Gentile people, but their world is

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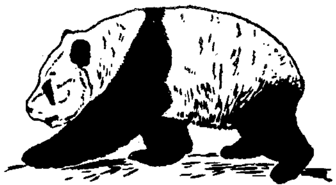

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not our world. I may see an occasional play or concert or TV program—most of the people in the community don't have TVs and don't go to the movies, by the way—but these are not the important activities in my life. Being a Jew and fulfilling the commandments *is* my life, and it's Moshe's. It takes up all our time. It's the same for everyone here, so it follows that the people we see are going to be involved in the same kind of life."

"You don't feel that you're cutting yourselves off from any of the richness of life by shutting things out just because *they're different?*"

"No, I don't. I can't imagine a richer life than the one I'm leading. Anyway, we're not all that shut off from the world. Moshe and I travel."

"You do? Is that common here?"

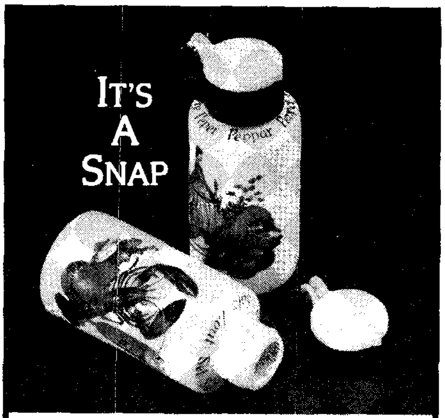
"Well, it's quite common to go off to another city or country to help start or build a Lubavitcher center, but people here travel for pleasure, too. We went to London last summer."

"What did you do there?"

"We visited Lubavitcher families and the yeshivas in and near the city, but we also went to see the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Tower of London and Madame Tussaud's. Of course, when you do these things you can sometimes get into trouble; we certainly did when we went to the Tower of London on a Friday." She smiled.

"What do you mean?"

"There was a tube strike in London at the time, and even though we left the Tower at four o'clock in the afternoon in order to be sure to get to the friend's house we were staying at in Golders Green by nine, when *Shabbos* began, we very nearly didn't make it. We couldn't find a taxi. We had to change buses several times, and the queues were endless. At seven-thirty, we were still standing at the end of a long queue at Oxford Circus, and there were no buses in sight. Moshe said, 'Let's walk.' We were both exhausted by then, and pretty frantic, and there didn't seem to be any chance that we could make it, but off we headed toward Golders Green, which was about an hour away by *bus*. I nearly started to cry. Then Moshe bent over to a fellow who had stopped his car at a light, and told him that he was a religious Jew and that we simply had to be at our friend's house by sundown. He told him that he'd give him whatever amount of money he wanted if he would drive us there. At



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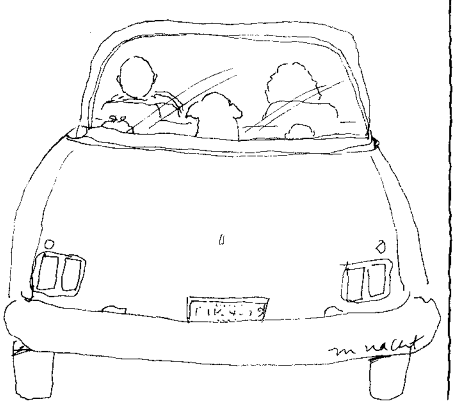
first, the man looked at Moshe as if he were crazy, but it turned out that he was a religious Catholic. He was surprised that we couldn't get a special dispensation because of the strike—*he* could have, he said—but he agreed to take us, and we made it. He didn't want to accept any money, but we insisted, because it didn't seem fair to have him go out of his way for nothing."

"Why do you think that people aren't supposed to work on the Sabbath?" I asked. "Why does it honor God more to desist from work than to work?"

Sheina bit her lip and said, "Ask Moshe when he comes back. He knows more about things like that than I do."

About an hour and a half later, Moshe, Isaac, and the rabbi from South Africa returned from the synagogue. Sheina had told me earlier that on weekdays her husband prayed three times a day (as Jewish law requires) at 770—which is how the Lubavitchers of Crown Heights refer to their synagogue—because there were always so many people there that he was sure to find the quorum of ten men needed for public prayer. On Fridays and Saturdays, however, he prayed at a *shtiebl*, or small synagogue, around the corner, one of about a dozen that were built in the first half of the century and had lost most of their congregations in the fifties and sixties. Many Lubavitchers did the same thing, she explained, because they wanted to keep the little synagogues going. Moshe, resplendent in a long black caftan and a velvet yarmulke with gilt rickrack, rubbed his hands together and regarded the room and his guests with obvious satisfaction. A few minutes later, his sons and a school friend rushed breathlessly into the room. When Mendel spied me, he nudged his brother; Shmuel glanced my way briefly, but stared fixedly at his shoes when he greeted me. They'd made it



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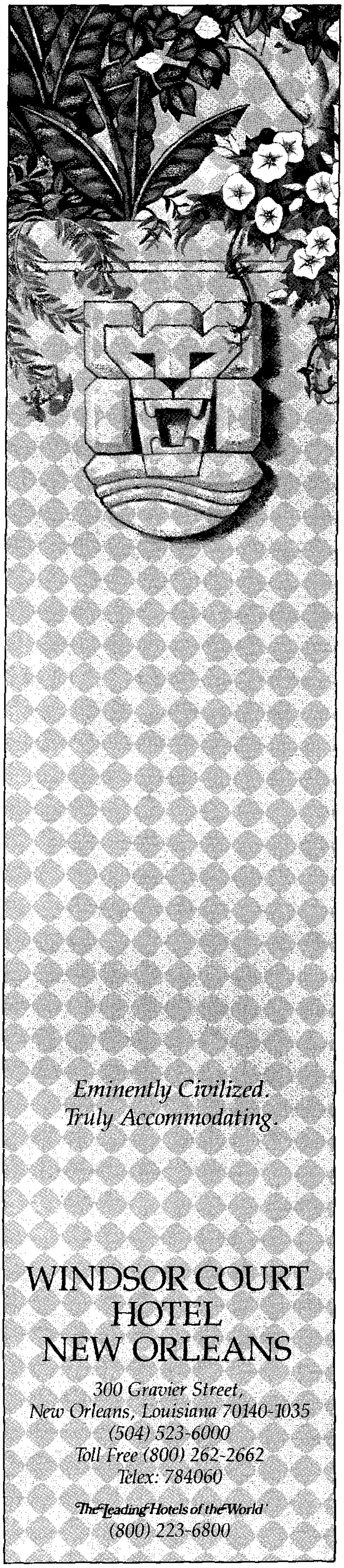
in the nick of time, Sheina explained, since *kiddush*, the prayer of sanctification, had to be recited before six o'clock. It was five minutes of six. They'd been somewhat delayed coming in from Morristown, New Jersey, where they were all students at the Rabbinical College of America, the Lubavitchers' principal yeshiva in this country for college-age men, and so had gone to evening prayers directly after they arrived back in the neighborhood. Their friend was another visitor from South Africa. Everyone gathered around the table, and the men sang the traditional "Shalom Aleichem"—a hymn paying homage to the angels that accompanied them home from the synagogue. After the hymn, I noticed Moshe looking rather intently at Sheina and singing something in a low voice. She was smiling. Later that evening, she explained that Moshe had been singing verses from the thirty-first chapter of the Book of Proverbs, beginning with the well-known one "A woman of valor, who can find; for her price is far above rubies." This apparent paean to the practical virtues of Jewish housewifery was in fact interpreted by the early Kabbalists as a hymn to the *Shechinah*, God's female aspect. I knew that Hasidic men sang this to their wives every Sabbath, but I had somehow expected that it would be a more public, declamatory ritual. The intimacy of the moment took me by surprise.

One of the guests asked where Moshe's two other daughters were, and was told that the eldest, Miriam, lived in Cape Town with her husband and children, and that Bassy, the youngest, was with her grandmother. Bassy, a slim, spirited girl of nineteen, who in the secular world would probably be taken for the captain of her school field-hockey team, had explained to me several hours earlier, as she hastily gathered a few belongings together and headed for the door, that she spent *Shabbos* with her widowed grandmother, who lived around the corner. "Sometimes she comes here for *Shabbos*, but sometimes she likes to stay at home, so I help her prepare everything and I stay overnight to keep her company," Bassy said. When I said that most of the girls her age whom I knew would not be eager to do such a thing, she seemed genuinely surprised. "But I don't mind at all—it's no problem," she said. "You'll see when you meet *bubbe*. She's great! Actually, I've spent every night with her



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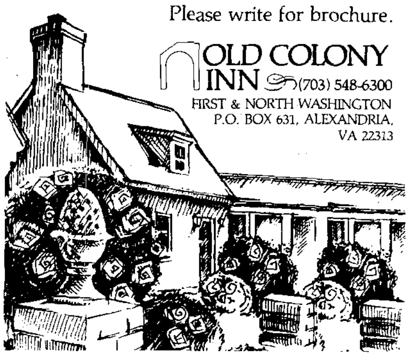

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since she had to have one of her fingers removed because of cancer last year. It's really no big deal."

Moshe filled a silver *kiddush* cup to the brim with sweet wine and, holding the cup in the palm of his hand, he recited the prayer of sanctification. Then all present trooped off to the kitchen in silence to wash their hands before the meal. Like virtually every facet of Hasidic life, washing before meals is accomplished in a ritually prescribed manner: one fills a chalice with water and pours it first over the right hand, then over the left, while reciting the benediction "Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us concerning the washing of the hands." One by one, the guests returned in silence to the table. Moshe removed a velvet cover from two home-baked loaves of *challah* (two to commemorate the extra portion of manna that the Israelites were given on the first Sabbath eve of the Exodus), poured everybody some wine, lifted the bread, recited another blessing, then cut off a piece for everybody at the table. Everyone dipped his chunk of bread in salt (evoking the ancient Temple sacrifices, in which salt was used), and the meal, trumpeted in by a great outburst of talk, began in earnest. A staggering amount of food appeared, but the guests seemed to like to talk even more than they liked to eat, and much of the dinner was destined to sit untouched on the plates for long periods. The menu was inspired largely by Eastern Europe and the suburban Midwest, with Eastern Europe predominating. There was gefilte fish, of course, and a tossed salad, chicken soup with matzoh balls, roast chicken, braised beef, noodle pudding, a spinach-and-broccoli mold, and a nondairy ice-cream pie with a pecan crust for dessert. Whiskey, wine, and cordial bottles were scattered across the length of a snowy, starched tablecloth. In front of Moshe, who sat at the head of the table with the men on either side of him, was a bottle of Chivas Regal; his sons poured each other glasses of Israeli wine; and the women sipped from a dazzling assortment of cordials, including banana liqueur, Kahlua, Cherry Heering, and blackberry brandy, some of which came from miniature bottles—souvenirs, perhaps, of Purim.

Over the matzoh-ball soup, I asked Moshe why it was, apart from emulating the actions of the Creator, that

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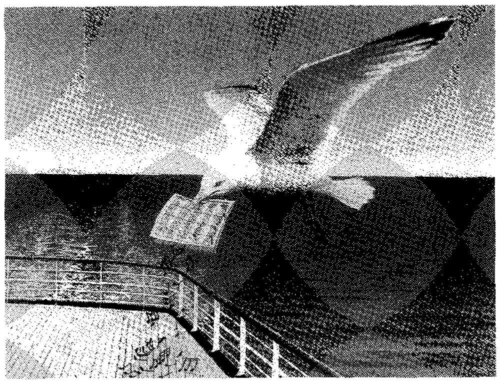

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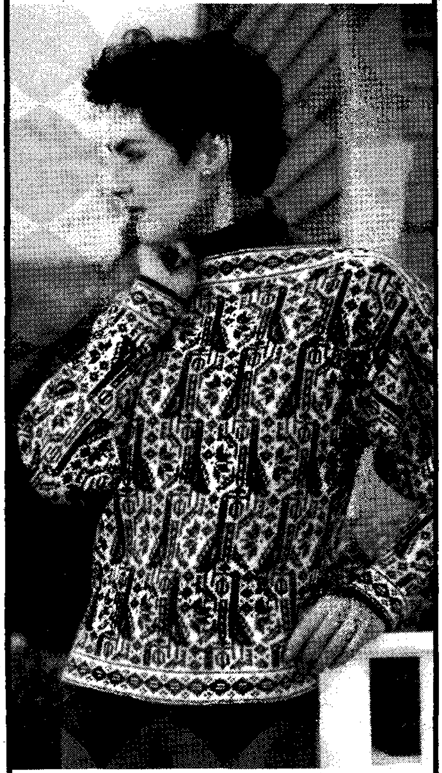

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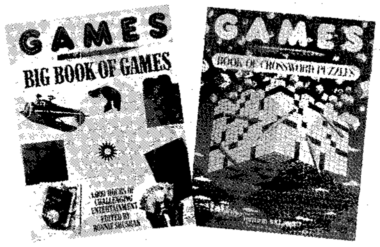
ceasing to work on the Sabbath honored God. His sons looked at me in astonishment, scarcely believing that anyone would not know why *Shabbos* was *Shabbos*, but Moshe seemed pleased that I'd asked the question.

"What happens when we stop working and controlling nature?" he asked, peering at me over the top of his glasses. "When we don't operate machines, or pick flowers, or pluck fish from the sea, or change darkness to light, or turn wood into furniture? When we cease interfering with the world, we are acknowledging that it is God's world."

The rabbi from South Africa, a robust, cheerful man with a thick, curly black beard, added that the Sabbath was also a memorial to the Exodus. "Once the Jews left Egypt, they were no longer enslaved," he said. "But, of course, the ordinary workaday world always involves a kind of servitude, and for many people, especially poor people, work can be awfully grinding. But no one is the master of any Jew on the Sabbath. Every body and every soul is free on that day. Tyrannical countries have always tried to force Jews to work on Saturdays, to mock this gesture of independence. East European Jews fought anti-Sabbath edicts and statutes for centuries."

Moshe chose this moment to lead the men in a beautiful Aramaic hymn, written by Isaac Luria and familiar to everyone present, which depicted the Sabbath as a bride "adorned in ornaments, jewels, and robes." The hymn continues, "Her husband embraces her; through this gathering which brings her joy, the forces of evil will be utterly crushed." The Sabbath as queen or bride is a popular metaphor in the literature of the mystics. Her husband is all Israel—that is, every Jew. Almost all religious Jews sing at the Sabbath meal. The songs they sing celebrate the joys of the Sabbath and were written chiefly during the Middle Ages. Lubavitcher Hasidim have their own melodies, or *nigunim*, most of which have been composed by their rebbes; they are sung on almost any occasion that offers itself. Among the Sabbath *nigunim* sung that weekend were one composed by the present Lubavitcher rebbe ("May we be united with the Supreme One in whom is the life of all things; may our strength be increased, and may [our prayer] ascend and become a [diadem] upon His head") and one composed by the first rebbe ("Rejoice now, at this most propitious time, when there is no sad-



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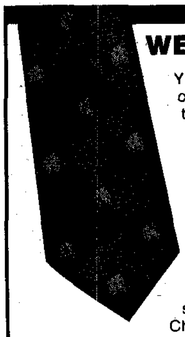

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ness. Draw near to Me, behold My strength, for there are no harsh judgments. They are cast out, they may not enter, these [forces of evil that are likened to] insolent dogs").

Moshe had a fine, clear voice and sang with gusto, sometimes closing his eyes, the better to concentrate on the song. I remarked that he seemed to enjoy singing a lot. He made a little self-deprecatory gesture and pulled on his beard, but smiled. "I come from a musical family," he said. "My grandfather played the violin for the soldiers when he was in the Red Army. My Bassy is a good pianist, too, you know." Songs were sung throughout the meal, and the singing grew more animated as the hour grew later. If the food anchored the guests ever more heavily to their chairs, the songs acted as a kind of spiritual counterweight. Unfamiliar as I was with the songs, I felt a strong urge to join in, though I had not failed to notice that none of the women were singing. While the noodle pudding was being passed, I asked the young *baalat teshuvah*, who was sitting next to me, if it didn't bother her to be left out of the singing.

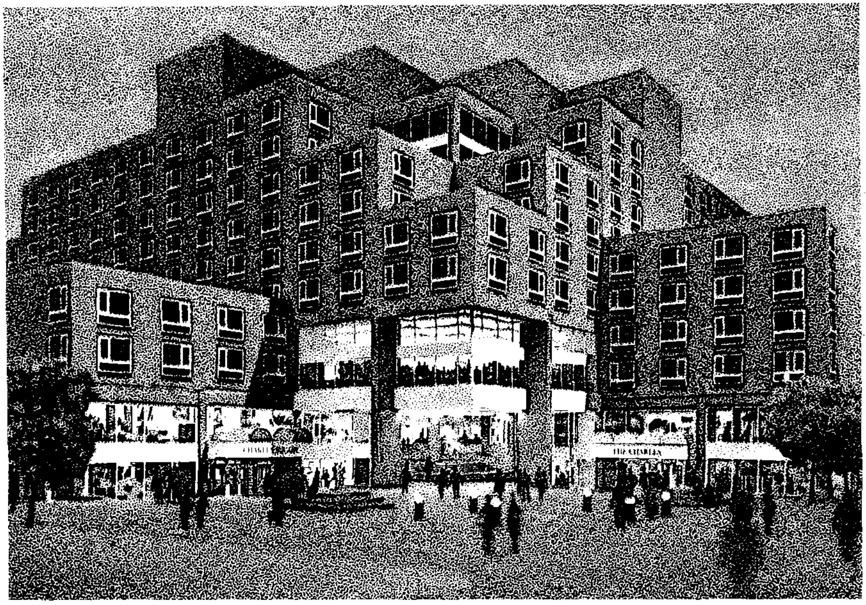
"A little," she admitted, "but I sort of sing along to myself."

"Do you know why women aren't supposed to sing?"

"Well," she said, gazing placidly at me over a forkful of noodles, "women's voices can be highly arousing to men, so our sages thought it best that we didn't sing in front of them. It doesn't work the other way around, though, because women have always been considered more spiritual, so a man's singing is not going to upset them or anything."

Seeing what must have been an ill-disguised expression of bemusement on my face, the yeshiva student from South Africa, a gentle-looking, pink-cheeked fellow of about nineteen, said to me in a reproving tone, "People all think the modest ways of Hasidic women are absurd and unnecessary,

Judith Shahn



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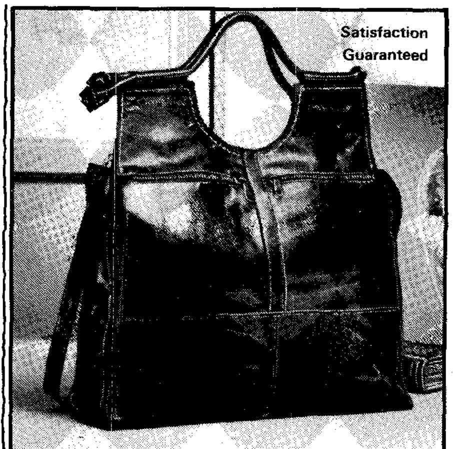
don't they? But they're wrong. Last week, a group of us were speaking about Hasidic life at one of the universities, and a student said to us, 'You know, it's really ridiculous the way your women cover their elbows and their knees, and the way you make married women wear wigs. I'm not turned on by elbows and knees, and I'm not going to ravish anybody's wife just because her hair is beautiful.' And most of the people there either laughed or smiled. 'Well,' I said, 'it's too bad if beautiful hair and legs and arms don't arouse you. They do me.' Uh, and that's true. It takes a lot to turn people on today, because there's so much public nudity and promiscuity. People have become coarsened. No wonder the simple sight of beautiful flesh doesn't mean much. But in our world, where there is no exposure to such things, and where the sexes are separated so much of the time, things are different."

Perhaps, I thought, looking around the table at the attractively dressed, carefully made-up women present. But why hair, elbows, and knees? Why not eyes, hands, napes of necks, ankles? And what about mouths? Muslim women's mouths were considered so tempting that they had to be concealed behind veils.

Gazing at the young man approvingly, Moshe said, "Dovid came into our midst because of what people call our proselytizing campaign, although that's really the wrong word for what we do. The Rebbe started a program some years ago of sending young couples around to places where there were sizable Jewish communities—not only in our country but all over the world. He hoped that they would quicken awareness of what Judaism had to offer our people. We sent yeshiva students out in the *mitzvah* tanks [the white Lubavitcher campers] for the same reason. They usually come back *amazed* by the welcome they receive. The most unlikely people sometimes respond to what they have to say. My daughter Miriam and her husband never expected what they have found in South Africa—a lot of people who are willing to take on the obligations of a more religious life. Dovid is one of them."

Looking slightly embarrassed, Dovid explained that until recently he had lived with his family on a large South African cattle ranch and attended the University of Cape Town. But his conversations with Moshe's daughter and son-in-law at the uni-



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versity convinced him that a lot of the things he missed in his life—a sense of purpose and commitment, a feeling of community—could be supplied by Judaism, and more particularly by the Lubavitchers' way of life. He thought about it for several months and then decided to leave the university, come to New York, and study at the Lubavitcher yeshiva. "It was the smartest thing I ever did," he added.

"Did your parents give you a hard time?" the girl next to me asked.

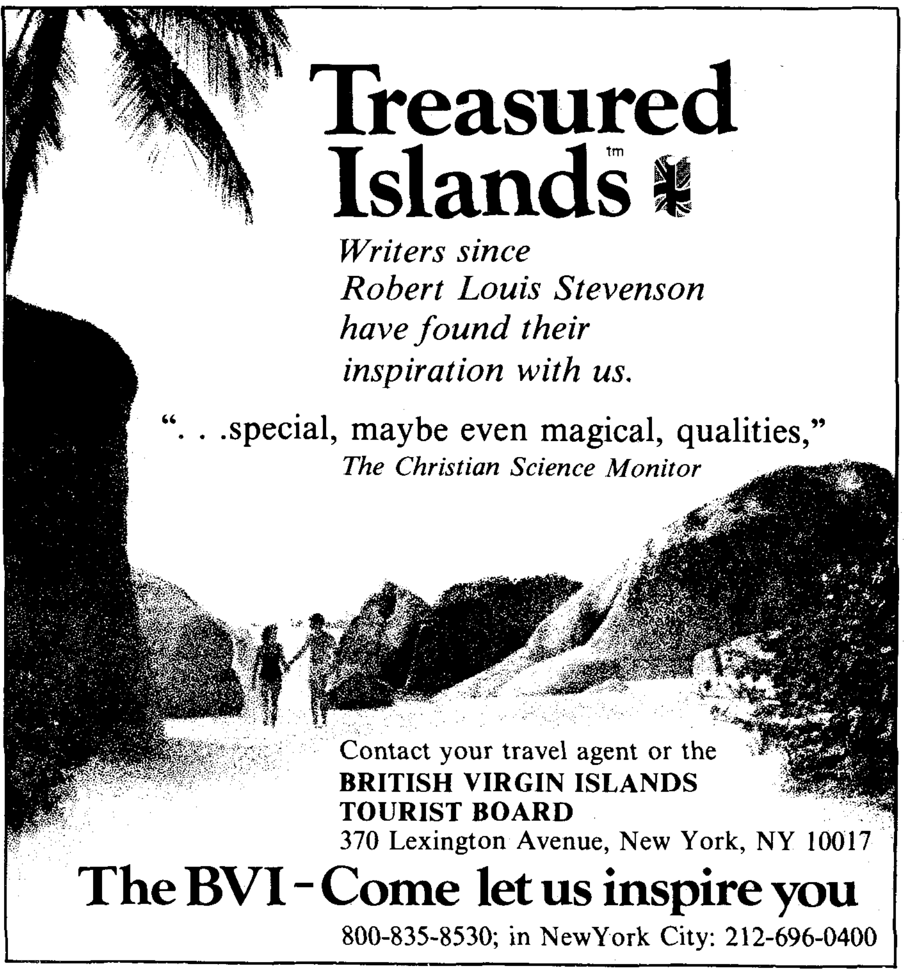
"Not really," said Dovid.

"Well, mine did. And they still do. They think the Lubavitchers are some kind of weird cult. They hated it when I started observing *Shabbos*, and they hated it when I told them that I wanted to study Judaism seriously and lead a more religious life. Sometimes I think they'd rather have me smoke pot than pray." Everybody laughed.

"From the beginnings of the Hasidic movement, outsiders have wanted to think of us as a cult or a sect," said Moshe. "That's why we were excommunicated in the eighteenth century. But we were never a sect. On the contrary, from the beginning the Besht intended that all Jews should be brought closer together because of his ideas. If the various Hasidic dynasties that formed in different towns after his death came to be regarded as separate entities, that was never what was intended. The Lubavitchers in particular—from our founder, Rabbi Schneur Zalman, to the present rebbe—have always tried to reach all Jews. If we seem so different from other Jews, it's more because of what has happened to them than because of anything that has happened to us. We've stayed the same—it's they who've changed."

"You know, there is a saying among Hasidim that the Messiah will come 'when the wellsprings of the Baal Shem Tov spread out,' " Sheina added, as she eased generous wedges of cocoa-colored pie onto plates and passed them down the table. "That is, when everything he taught becomes the common practice of all Jews in the Diaspora. That's why the Rebbe sends the young people out in the campers and around the world. Jews don't really stick together, because there is a breach among us. He wants to heal it."

It would come as no small surprise to me to learn, as I quickly did in talking to the people of Crown Heights, that the chief twentieth-century popularizer of Hasidic thought and tales,



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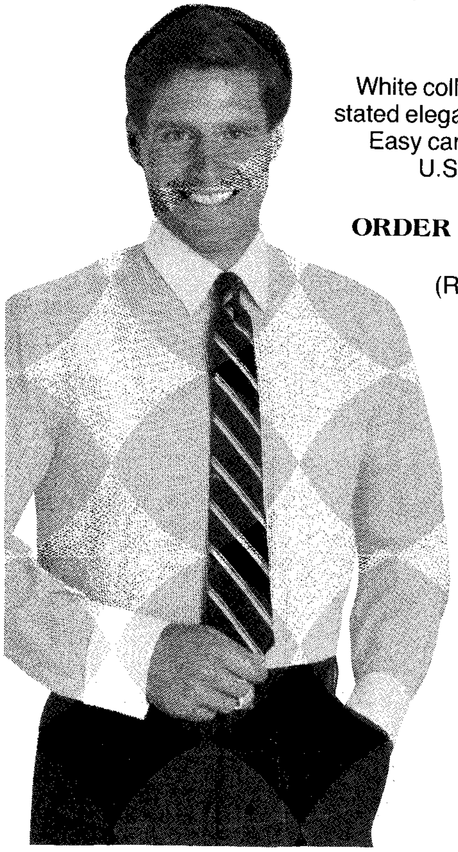

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Martin Buber, is considered by most Hasidim to have misconstrued both the message of the Besht and the essence of Hasidism. They feel that he placed too much emphasis on the legends and too little on Kabbalistic doctrine. Gershom Scholem (whom the Hasidim also dislike, because of what they regard as his anarchic intellect) agreed. In Buber's version of Hasidism, its adherents find "joy in the world as it is, in life as it is, in every hour of life. . . ." But in reality, as Scholem writes, the true joy of Hasidism is "to extract, I may even say distill, the perpetual life of God out of life as it is. It is not the fleeting Here and Now that is to be enjoyed, but the everlasting unity and presence of Transcendence." Buber describes a Hasidism that "does not acknowledge any teaching about *what* should be done but puts the whole emphasis on intensity," Scholem says, adding, "Therefore, references to the Torah and the Commandments, which to the Hasidim meant everything, become extremely nebulous in Buber's presentation."

The more I saw of Hasidic life, the more I would be persuaded that Scholem was right: the charm of the Hasidim's stories, the quaintness of their appearance, their mystical theology were, to the world, manifestations of their singularity and made it easy to think of Hasidism as a cult, which, as Moshe pointed out, it never was. But the core of Moshe and Sheina's life was the Law—"the Torah and the Commandments." Their mysticism, their vigilant studying, and even their rebbe were merely mining tools. Were their story to be told in Buber's "Tales of the Hasidim," Sheina's tweediness, Moshe's good humor, Bassy's adolescent energy, and the xenophobia of Shmuel and Mendel would never be mentioned; we would learn only about "a good woman," "a pious man," "a dutiful daughter," and her "studious brothers." But in real life what was amazing about the Konigsbergs and those around them was the passion with which they strove to submerge themselves, with all their quirks and weaknesses, to better serve what Scholem calls "the everlasting unity" and to see in the world, with all *its* quirks and weaknesses, "the presence of Transcendence." In a sense, my first impression of their life—on Purim, a day of rejoicing and simple, exuberant celebration—might be said to have been Buberesque, but the more I saw of the family, the more deep-

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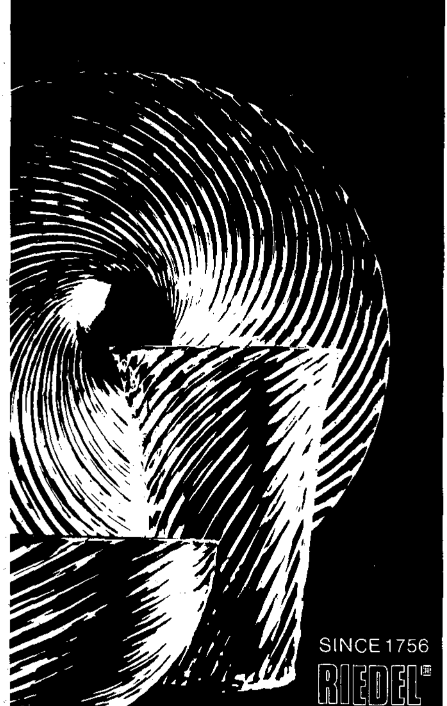

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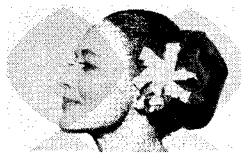

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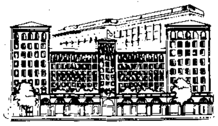

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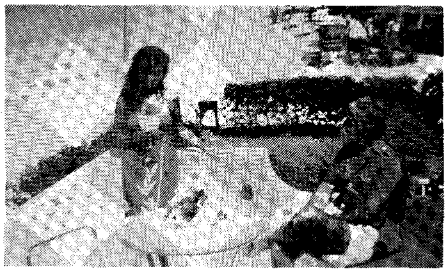

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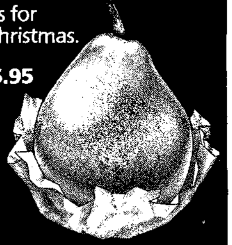

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ly rooted in traditional Jewish rituals and the more inward, or Scholemish, their life appeared. What made them different from other Orthodox Jews was not simply a conglomeration of charmingly pious customs that outsiders could readily imagine transformed into a kind of Hasidic "Fiddler on the Roof." It was the way they approached their rituals; their wholehearted adoption of the Lurianic mythos and the teachings of their leaders; their dedication to the study of these things; and their passionate attachment to their rebbe.

Around ten o'clock, the women began to clear the table. Moshe carried one or two things to the kitchen, but Shmuel was still eating a second helping of dessert, and the boys got into a knotty discussion of a point of Hebrew semantics just as the clearing up began. They did not resolve it until the table was cleared of everything but the still softly glowing candelabrum. Moshe entered into the discussion after a while, and I noticed that though he spoke English when he talked with Sheina, he and the boys spoke to one another in Yiddish. Some of the guests lingered at the table, some drifted over to the couch and chairs at the fireplace. The woman from South Africa asked Shmuel, who was seated in an armchair, his stomach protruding over his belt, how a certain friend of his was getting on. Shmuel said that he was married, and that he and his wife had recently had their second child. He looked at his shoes as he answered.

"And what about you?" she asked pertly. In these circles, a twenty-five-year-old was considered a bit long in the tooth for bachelorhood.

"What about me?" Shmuel answered, keeping his eyes down. There was a defensive edge in his voice, but also a real note of misery.

"Oh, Shmuel will settle down when the right time comes," her husband said, looking at him evenly and drawing his wife away to examine some books across the room. Shmuel raised himself heavily from the chair with a little sigh, found a book, and retired to a quiet corner to study. Five minutes later, Mendel and Moshe joined him, and their heads remained bent together for the rest of the evening. During the winter months, when it got dark earlier, Moshe met with a group of Lubavitcher neighbors every Friday night to study, Sheina explained to me, but in the months when it turned dark late he studied either with his sons or by himself at home on *Shabbos*. In

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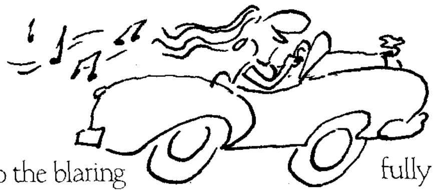

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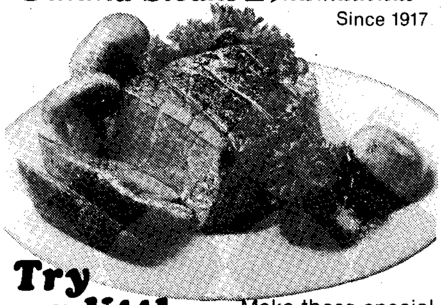

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fact, she said, Moshe repaired to his religious texts every night after dinner, and it was not unusual for him to be up until two in the morning studying.

Conversation among the guests continued in an animated way into the early hours of the morning, turning frequently to Biblical events and their connection with the lives of those assembled at the house, to coming religious holidays, and to some of the Rebbe's recent talks. Subjects such as jobs, politics, movies, the environment, secular books, and the latest baseball scores never entered even the fringes of discussion. There was a bit of gossip, but it was mostly about who was getting married or who was having a baby. Several times in the course of the evening, I had heard Moshe mention Avraham and Yitzhak. I thought he was talking about some neighbors, but it turned out that he was talking about the Biblical Abraham and Isaac.

Throughout the weekend, I would be struck by the familiar, even intimate way in which Moshe, Sheina, and the others spoke of Biblical people and places. Abraham and Isaac all but hovered near the stove, and miraculous deeds had more credibility than newspaper stories. This personal, mystical relationship to the Bible serves as a kind of Jewish relic, or monument to the past—its only religious monument, in fact, since (in contrast to other religions) most of the material relics of Judaism, such as the Temple and many of the sacred books, have been destroyed. Like the shtetl Jews whom Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog wrote about in "Life Is with People," an anthropological study of shtetl life, the Hasidic community today "traces its line of march directly back to Creation," and "the Exodus from Egypt, the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, are seen as steps along the way, historical events no less real than the Spanish Inquisition or the Russian Revolution." The Konigsbergs and their guests were living in a kind of perpetual Biblical present, in which the events of their everyday lives were constantly being linked to their spiritual past. Their rebbes have traditionally been the guides who interpreted the interconnectedness of the two, and the names of former Lubavitcher rebbes and other Hasidic leaders were evoked that weekend as if they were old friends. "Ah, the *frierdike* [previous] rebbe used to say . . ." or, "Did that happen to you? The same thing happened to the

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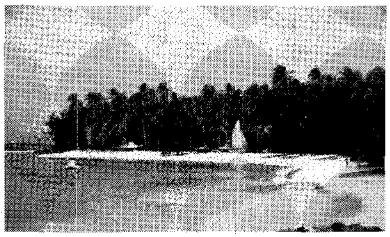

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Tzemach Tzedek [the third Lubavitcher rebbe].” The history of these Hasidic ancestors, too, seemed inextricably bound to the lives of their descendants.

At two-fifteen, I excused myself and went upstairs. I was to spend the night in Bassy’s room—a cheerful, frilly retreat that, unlike the bedroom of every other teen-age girl of my acquaintance, was innocent of posters of rock godlets, photographs of boyfriends, or clippings of Peanuts cartoons. All that met the eye was several shelves filled with religious books and some neatly arranged cosmetics on top of a dresser. The sole wall decoration was a blue-and-white banner that, like a bumper sticker on a car I’d seen in the driveway, proclaimed, “JEWISH MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS LIGHT SHABBOS CANDLES.” Heavily ballasted with matzoh balls and conversation, I knew I would sink into sleep almost immediately. As I pulled a soft blue-and-white comforter over my head and drifted off, it occurred to me that scarcely any words had been spoken all evening about any nonreligious subject. A few hours later, I was awakened by a street noise. I glanced at my watch. It was four-fifteen. A low hum of conversation drifted up from below.

—LIS HARRIS

(This is the first part of a three-part article.)

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THE ART WORLD

A Stranger in Paris

GILLES, the hero of Jean-Antoine Watteau's painting of that name, is such a known and loved presence that it was a small shock to find, at the Watteau exhibition at the National Gallery of Art last season, that the painting had been retitled "Pierrot." Gilles and Pierrot were similar stock characters in the old comedies; they were simpleton-buffoons who dressed all in white. Some scholars now believe that Watteau specifically had Pierrot in mind. The new name takes some adjusting to, but it doesn't change the way we think about the painting. Watteau's actor, with his arms hanging down placidly before him, remains one of the most sheepish, isolated, and superior figures in art. He stands directly before us in this six-foot-high painting—it was made around 1720—unaware of the other characters, in the lower part of the scene. His pants are too short and his white shoes are tied with red bows; a ruff collar encircles his neck, and he wears both a skullcap and a straw hat. His face is as secretive as any by Leonardo, and there is a gravity to him that recalls Rembrandt. His blankness, though, is what is fascinating. At times, he's suggestively blank, like one of Manet's women; at other times, he's as defiantly impassive as an Alex Katz. He appears to know how awkward and uncomfortable he is—and, too, how his power comes from his willingness to be awkward and foolish. He is the first figure in art who, it seems, is one of us.

The Watteau exhibition—it opened at the National Gallery, went on to the Grand Palais, in Paris, and closed this summer at the Schloss Charlottenburg, in Berlin—had the same indirect and quietly magnetic power, and so did the artist himself. Shortly after his death, six of his friends wrote biographies of him, and there was a seventh by someone who hadn't known him. (Quotes from these accounts appear in the show's huge catalogue, written principally by Margaret Morgan Grasselli and Pierre Rosenberg.) Watteau's friends, who were artists, dealers, and collectors, clearly wanted to pay their respects to his talent and his memory; he was not quite thirty-seven when he died, in 1721, of tuberculosis. Yet they seem to have been equally desirous of describing his baffling and not so lovable character. We hear that he was shy, naïve—also sharp-tongued, "difficult," and "impossible." Though he was severely critical of his own work, and he had a schoolboy's adoration for many artists, especially Rubens, he was surprisingly willing to hustle his pictures. He was a drifter, too: he didn't marry, and he never had an address of his own. He moved from one friend's house to another, sometimes staying a year or more. He doesn't seem to have ever been alone—or "with" any one person or family, either.

Watteau was also a bit of an outsider in Paris. He was born in Valenciennes, which France had annexed a few years before his birth but which had long been a part of Flanders, and he struck some Parisians as a rube. Yet as an artist he became recognized for his sophistication and urbanity. Although he wasn't prolific and his career lasted little more than a decade, he is given credit for introducing a new sensual and ambiguous tone into European painting—a tone that influenced artists through much of the eighteenth century. "Pierrot," which is owned by the Louvre, may be his best-known single work, but he is most often associated with images of courtiers and women in softly lit woodland scenes. His very name has long been synonymous with a courtierlike approach to life, a kind of grace under sadness.

The exhibition, which included some forty paintings and twice that number of drawings, and was the largest gathering of works by Watteau ever, revealed him to be the same tricky character his friends described. He isn't exactly a master—he is more like an ambitious and sometimes mixed-up young artist in the process of becoming a master. And he isn't the wistful and romantic painter he is said to be, either. Few of his paintings are humorous, but temperamentally he's comic: he looks at people from a distance. The show was wonderful and absorbing, but not conventionally satisfying. I was genuinely drawn to only a handful of small oils, his drawings, and two of his last, and least typical, paintings—"Pierrot" and "Gersaint's Shopsign." Yet I was left keyed up, not only because each of these late works is a one-of-a-kind masterpiece but because everything he did comes together in them. You can be sympathetic to him even when his individual pictures are "off," because you see the direction he's heading in, and that gives him the immediacy of a contemporary artist: we want to figure out the relationship between the pictures that click and those that don't.

Watteau's fame is based on a type of picture called a *fête galante*, which he, in effect, invented. The *fêtes*, which make up the bulk of his work, show men and women (and occasionally children) in luxuriant parks; they stroll, lounge, read, glance at and reach toward one another. A girl may be on a swing, a courtier may play a guitar, and sometimes a dance is under way. Many people believe that Watteau, in these idylls, is a subtle poet of bittersweet love, of the small shifts in the relations between men and women. The actual paintings, though, feel empty and abstract. They're not dull, but they make us restless for some action to begin. Watteau doesn't seem to care about what is going on in these scenes—the expressions seem fake. Perhaps his *fêtes galantes* couldn't be properly judged in the Washington show. The large "Pilgrimage to the Island of Cythera," in the Louvre's collection, for many his grandest picture, and a number of his most admired *fêtes*, including those in the Wallace Collection, in London, and one in the National Gallery of Scotland, couldn't be borrowed. Yet these works, seen in reproduction, appear to be as synthetic as the many in the show; you believe you're looking at "costume" pictures, which could have been made at any time, of people dressed in eighteenth-century satins.

"The Two Cousins," which was in the exhibition, is striking because it isn't a "pretend" drama. In this picture of three people beside a pond in a park, the main character is a woman with her back to us. She shows no interest in the couple next to her, and looks off into the big, pale-green sky. We do, too; we sense that something will happen, and she will be released from her trance. Watteau's placement of the isolated woman is elegant and daring, and the picture's unusual silvery-green tone transports us to a specific moment: this might be a late afternoon on a humid day in early autumn. In "The Faux-Pas," another successful picture, we're also given the sensation of a specific moment. This time, it is a hot, dry autumn day. The picture shows a man grappling with a woman, who is seen from the back and appears to be pushing him away. They're toppling, and everything is flushed, charged with an orange-red light—even the leaves and the earth.

It was hard to linger with most of the *fêtes*, though, because there isn't enough of Watteau himself—his touch, his hand—in them. "The Embarkation for Cythera," for example—it is a more profusely detailed, near-replica of the Louvre's "Cythera"—was off-puttingly bright, almost garish. It seemed to have been overcleaned in restoration, while other pictures, which were gummy and dark, seemed to need restoration (they may, however, be too fragile for it). The poor physical state of Watteau's paintings isn't merely due to age, though. His contemporaries talked about how the surfaces became parched, or cakey, not long after they were made, and it isn't necessary to know that he emulated many artists to sense that he was forcing himself to do things in these works which he didn't instinctively want to do.

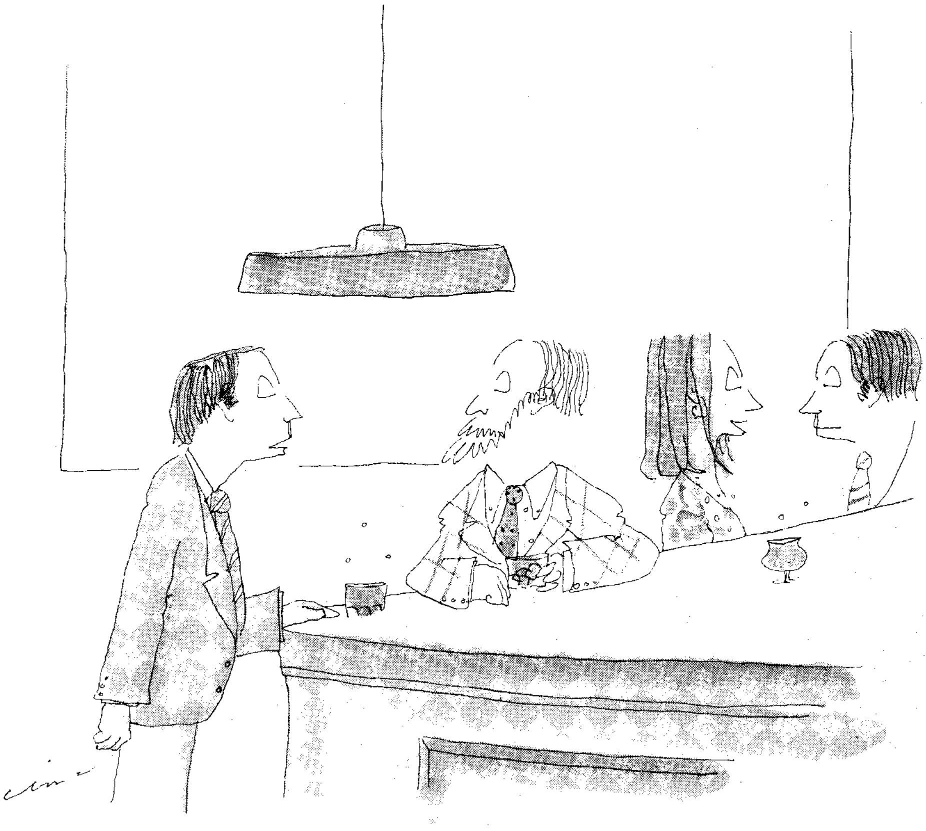
Watteau had a more spontaneous approach to picturemaking than any other artist of his period (and many artists long after him). He didn't prepare for each painting with studies—he composed directly on canvas, as many modern painters do. Yet his over-all method was indirect. In his earliest mature work, his subjects were characters from the theatre—Harlequin, Columbine, Pierrot, Mezzetin. He painted them in his own invented scenes, which he set in stagelike forests. He didn't paint actors and actresses, though—he apparently didn't know any at the time. He had a collection of theatrical costumes, which he had friends, servants, or strangers dress up in. He sketched their faces, hands, bodies, and clothes, and kept the drawings in portfolios. When he wanted to make a painting, he turned to his portfolios and took, say, the image of a woman seen from the rear, or of a man peering at something, or of a fiddler, and copied it onto the canvas. He arranged these figures, faces, and gestures the way a twentieth-century collagist would arrange scraps of this and that, to get a good composition.

As Watteau grew older, his subjects changed from theatrical characters to beautifully dressed men and women, and the forest settings became fairytale glades, but his approach remained the same. Some of his contemporaries said that his pictures were ruined because, wanting immediate results, he used his materials carelessly; other observers complained that he took forever. He probably did both. You can see how he wanted to make conventional paintings of this or that "scene," and also how he refused to part with the clothes, gestures, and faces from the drawings (which, by the time he was painting, were no longer fresh for him). The result is that the landscape settings, while often lovely in themselves, are essentially backdrops, and the clothes, gestures, and faces are so painstakingly delineated they're almost wizened.

Watteau's deeper dilemma, though, is that he wanted to base a romantic, courtly, and sensual art on his drawings, but they weren't made in that spirit. His drawings are the work of a brilliant cub reporter. Watteau might be called the greatest "sketch artist" who ever lived. In these studies, often done in a pale-red chalk, with touches of white and black, he goes right for the person before him—what he wears, his gestures, the spirit of his hands, the way he looks at something. There are almost no background details in these drawings, and we're not aware that they are missing. Nor does Watteau impart a particular message about his different sitters; he doesn't isolate a dignity, a robustness, a vulnerability, an elegance, or a rawness. It's as though he worked too quickly for there to be time for style or psychology to set in.

The most impressive drawings are portraits of individual Persians and Savoyards—people Watteau might have been attracted to because, like him, they were strangers in Paris. The Persians (they were part of a retinue that accompanied the Persian Ambassador to Paris in 1715) and the Savoyard men, women, and boys were also people he didn't have to find costumes for; they wore unusual outfits as a matter of course. In his studies of a young Persian in a fur cap, who is slouched in a chair and seems to be daydreaming, and of a corpulent, prepossessing, older Persian, who looks off to the left, Watteau gives us everything we could want: precise descriptions of the appearance of these individuals and, it seems, of their thoughts. Yet he does it with such a modest and economical touch that we're moved—we believe that in some way he was unaware of his own power.

Watteau's drawings are so engaging, and each is so different from the next, that you wanted more than the ninety-odd in the exhibition. (They



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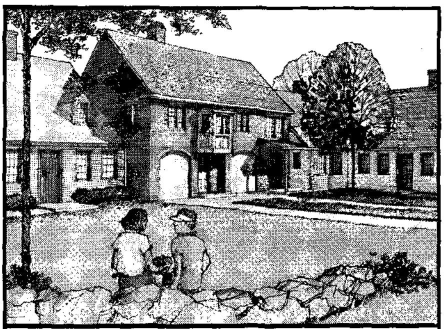

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represent about a tenth of his output.) The show could also have done without so many of his copies of older art; they're animated, but, as can be the case with copies, they're dead at the core. (The deadness is felt in the eyes—they have a mechanical sparkle.) It's unfortunate, too, that some of his finest drawings couldn't be sent to Washington (they are reproduced in the catalogue): "Portraits of the Two Daughters of Pierre Sirois," one of his most memorable images of women; "Portrait of Antoine de La Roque," a drawing of a pale-eyed man with a direct gaze, who stands facing us, on crutches; "Head of a Man," an unusual image of a face, turned to one side, that seems to nestle into the blank sheet of paper it is drawn on; and the awesome "Three Studies of the Head of a Young Black Boy."

THE exhibition's awesome work was "Pierrot." He stands stock-still, on a little rise or wall. Below and behind him, passing by in a sort of chorus-line formation, are four people, whom we see down to mid-chest level, dressed in theatrical costumes, and a donkey, who is part of the troupe—he has faded red ribbons tied to a rope around his neck. At first, you think the scene takes place outdoors and the people in the background are standing in a trench or ravine. But they're jammed so close to Pierrot, and the sky is so flat and shallow, you wonder if this isn't a theatre, with Pierrot standing on a set and the people and animal behind him standing on the floor of the stage.

What do they think of Pierrot? That's the question we keep coming back to. You read these faces from right to left. The man on the right in a red satin suit and hat pulls the donkey along—his energies are concentrated on the rope. Next to him is a woman, who, though she looks at the donkey, seems preoccupied—she seems to stare through the animal. Next to her is a man with a straw hat, the brim of which has been cut and resembles flames or waves. There's something flamelike about his raised brows and open mouth, too; he's clearly excited by something, but we don't know what. The last two figures, seen on the left of Pierrot's legs, are the donkey and a man in a black outfit, who rides the donkey. This man—his outfit identifies him as a comic character called the Doctor—is the spookiest figure of them all. We know his grin and the upturned motion of his eyes from real life (and probably can't re-

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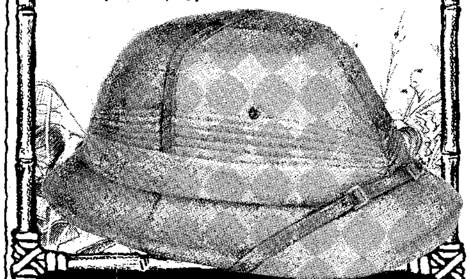

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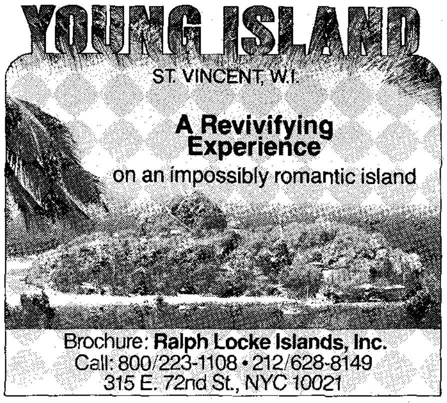

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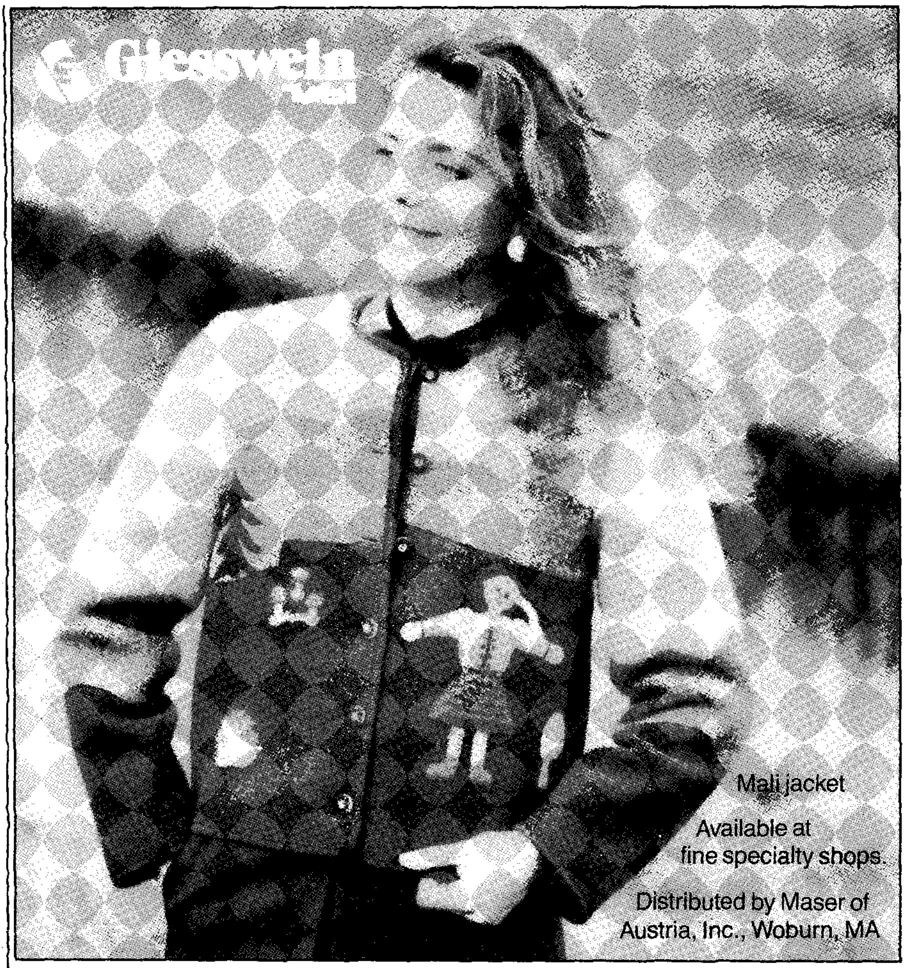
member if anyone other than Watteau has put this expression in a painting). The Doctor has a face that you might encounter in a café when you sense that someone is looking at you—you turn and, sure enough, someone who seems to be engaged with his friends at his own table glances at you at that instant. You may be a little unnerved, and think his face implies "I've been watching you all along." Yet perhaps he means nothing by his look; maybe he has turned involuntarily, because he senses you're about to look at him. Watteau's Doctor, his face in shadows, seems to glance out at us conspiratorially and say, with his too wet lips, "So, how do you like our Mr. Nothing up there?"

The painting isn't about self-pity, though it may seem so if you have never really looked at Pierrot's face. (There is a full-page color detail of it in the catalogue.) Sleepy, hot, moist around the eyes, developing a double chin, with the impacted look of someone whose nasal passages are permanently clogged, he's the ultimate adenoidal schlemiel. We can almost hear him breathing through that open mouth. The subtle little snarl on his upper lip, though, makes you believe he's quite capable of taking care of himself, and when you look at his eyes you suddenly feel, This is a very level-headed man appraising me. "Pierrot" raises countless questions as to its meanings—questions that you don't want definite answers for. Though he's a comic actor, this man could symbolize all artists; he could be a dancer, a mime, a painter in his smock, a poet about to recite. Is he dreaming about himself? Are the people at the bottom of the picture his conception of his audience? They are literally "beneath" him, "at his feet." Yet they seem to deliberately ignore him. What actually happens is that they don't see him, and that gives the picture its tension. You can't help feeling that you are Pierrot and that the people at the bottom ought, in some way, to acknowledge your presence. Does Pierrot think of himself as the donkey, the stubborn creature that these people (his friends? his colleagues?) yank along—and also "ride"? The donkey, after all, is the only one of the five who we are sure is looking at us. And he complements Pierrot. He possesses what Pierrot lacks, or keeps hidden: a sexiness, a hairiness, a romantic beauty.

Watteau is one of the leading mystery men of French painting. His con-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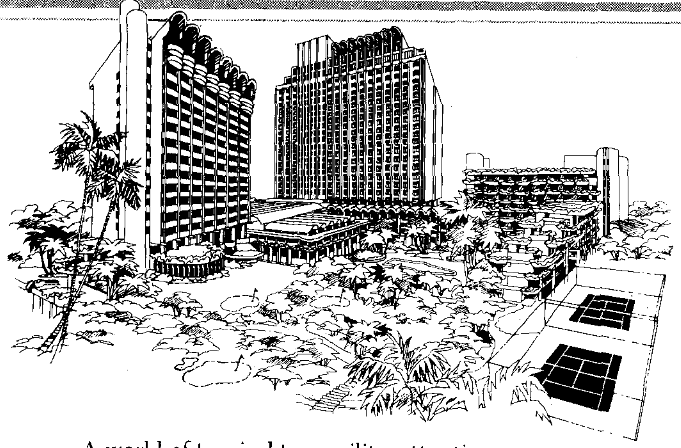

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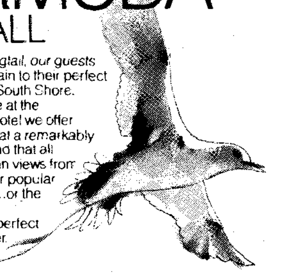

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temporaries were as uncertain about the meanings of his pictures as we are—he left no statements—and since almost none of his pictures were signed or dated (and individual ones have been repainted over the years) his actual development can never be pinned down. The liveliest mystery concerning him, though, is whether he even painted "Pierrot." After his death, his paintings and drawings were engraved and published, each in a two-volume set, by one of his closer friends, Jean de Jullienne. (It was through these books that Watteau's themes and compositions became influential in the first two-thirds of the eighteenth century.) But "Pierrot" wasn't among these engravings, and none of his friends mentioned it in their biographies. In fact, there is no record of the work's existence until, in 1826—over a hundred years after it was made—it turned up in a sale. It's also strange that "Pierrot" is the only life-size painting Watteau is thought to have made. He produced a couple of good-sized allegorical pictures, and a half-length portrait is attributed to him—it was in the show—but the majority of his paintings are surprisingly small. They're usually between ten and twenty inches high. And even when, as in the "Cythera" pictures, their dimensions are large, he worked on a miniaturist's scale. The paint handling, light, and color in "Pierrot" are different from *anything* else of his, too. In most of his paintings we're conscious of his brushwork and a soft light suffuses each color, but "Pierrot" isn't lustrous—it's evenly painted. Pierrot's outfit, with its folds and buttons and pockets and shadows, is one of the knockout passages of white in art, but it is far less shimmery than it appears in reproductions (including the one in this catalogue). And the sky, which can become a velvety gray-blue in color photographs, is a pale, dry turquoise. The painting has the muted, chalky tones of Venetian frescoes, pictures by Veronese and Tiepolo.

The underlying drama of the show was whether Watteau could have made "Pierrot." Could he have leaped from being a painter of somewhat tremulous miniatures to this muscular, public work? Pierre Rosenberg, in his catalogue notes on the painting, says that most scholars believe that he did. The same comic characters appear in his early pictures, a sketch exists for the Doctor, and the image of Pierrot standing stiffly before us is found in a few of his sketchier drawings and in

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the painting "Italian Comedians." A viewer can feel, though, that the proof that Watteau painted "Pierrot" is right in his work. His drawings show that he instinctively saw people in a big, simple way. (It was only when he transposed those drawings into paintings that everything shrank.) More than that, I think there is a direct relation between the theme of "Pierrot" (and the uncharacteristically bold way it is painted, and the fact that none of Watteau's contemporaries seem to have known about it) and the theme of the *fêtes galantes* (and the precious way they're painted—and Watteau's evident difficulty in bringing them off).

The story Watteau instinctively wanted to tell, you believe, was about how people are detached from one another. When he painted the relations between men and women in his *fêtes*, though, he toyed with that story. He teases us (and himself)—he makes it seem as if these might be scenes of budding romance, and so we get nothing: neither romance nor disillusionment. But when he painted Pierrot, Watteau seems to say, "You want to know what detachment looks and feels like? This is it." "Pierrot" isn't literally a self-portrait. Scholars are fairly certain that the subject is a Greek-born actor named Belloni, who had left the theatre to open a café; he probably commissioned the painting and used it as a sign for his coffeehouse. (The idea that "Pierrot" is a portrait of Belloni is strengthened by the fact that he and the painter had a few important things in common, and Watteau might have felt close to this man. As Donald Posner recounts it in his recent study, "Antoine Watteau," both were in their mid- to late thirties when the picture was made, and Belloni stopped acting because of an illness around the same time that Watteau's own illness became grave—that is, probably just before "Pierrot" was painted. And the actor, like the painter, died a short while later, in 1721.)

Yet Watteau must have seen himself in Pierrot. As he was traditionally performed, this character represented the opposite of what Watteau was attempting in his *fêtes*. Pierrot was the antithesis of urbane, smiling gracefulness. Onstage, he was a sweet innocent; he was also an ignoramus, a boor, the butt of jokes, and a lech. He never got the girl, but he always kept trying. Watteau painted Pierrot a few times when his work was first getting

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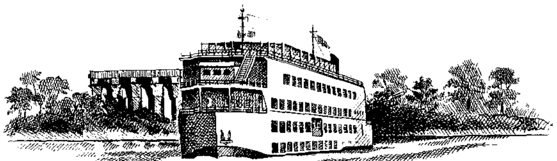

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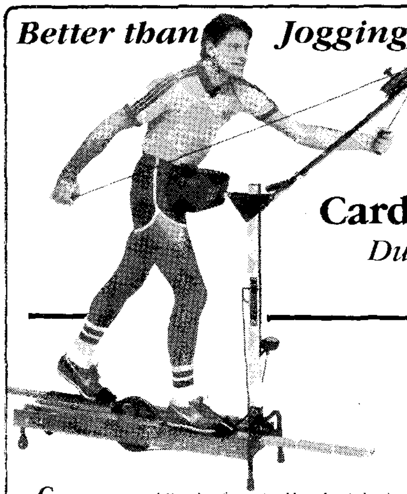

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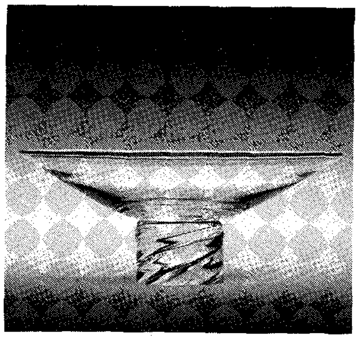

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under way (when his subjects were mostly theatre characters), and then again about eight years later, toward the end of his life, when, probably, he made the Louvre's picture. Following him as he uses Pierrot in his early painting, lays the image aside during the years when he is engaged by the *fête galante* theme, and then returns to Pierrot, we might be reading an old tale. It is a story of someone who asserts himself tentatively at the start of his climb to fame, then puts a crucial part of himself on hold as he moves into deeper waters in his art (and, possibly, as he moves in a society he wants to conquer). Finally, he returns to his initial sense of himself, but with a power he probably wouldn't have possessed if he hadn't tried to pass as something he wasn't.

A handful of his Pierrot paintings were in the exhibition, and, going from one of these small works to the next, you felt as if you were getting scenes from the life—and facets of the character—of the Pierrot in the Louvre's work. The figures in these Pierrot pictures are more graspable and firmly planted than Watteau's figures generally are, and the paintings have what the *fêtes galantes* lack: a sense of mystery and sexual conquest, of real people sizing up each other.

In "Party of Four," Pierrot, his back to us, stands before a man and two women who are seated on a bench in a park. The women seem to be taking Pierrot's measure in this tense nighttime scene; but the real drama is between Pierrot and the seated fellow, in a Mezzetin's outfit—he hardly seems to be more than seventeen. Considering that "Party of Four" is less than twenty inches high, and this figure is about eight inches from cap to toe, it is amazing how much Watteau conveys about him: we are sure that he is sweet and kind by nature, and nervous and sweaty at this moment. He is seemingly shown at the split second when he's altering his expression, from being startled by Pierrot to wanting to appear friendly to him. The viewer, anyway, finds Pierrot unnerving. Swaddled in white, his shoulders slightly hunched, and with his guitar slung over his back like a weapon, he is an ominous figure.

In "Pierrot Content," our hero is no longer a mysterious stranger—he's just a creep. This is probably an earlier work than "Party of Four," but it seems to present the next stage in the story. Pierrot is "content" because he has joined the group sitting on the bench. Smiling, his hands placed on his exaggeratedly outturned thighs (he looks like a frog in a white jumpsuit), he sits in the center of the bench and stares straight ahead, while his companions turn to him and to us. He makes no attempt to be part of the group. He's happy just to have grabbed the center place. He's a simpleminded little bully.

Watteau's most complex small Pierrot picture is "Happy Age, Golden Age," a roughly eight-by-nine-inch panel that might be called a child's version of the Louvre's painting (so it seems likely that they were done around the same time). The boy Pierrot in "Happy Age"—he's about four years old—faces us with a mixture of condescension and vacuity, and is oblivious of his four playmates, who surround him.

There's a crystalline beauty to the surface and colors of this painting. The predominant oranges, blues, and whites are icy and fiery at the same time, and the wet gray sky—and the smoke rising from a sketched-in castle in the distance—gives the picture a vivid wintry mood. The image itself is chilly, almost freakish; it seems at first to be a picture of dwarfs pretending to be children. We feel we're looking at the primal Watteau, the image that underlies all his pictures. We immediately see that his subject is dressing up, playacting—something we tell ourselves is the point when we look at most of his pictures of adults. (These kids express so many more emotions than the adults do in Watteau's paintings it's as if, as a person—and perhaps without being aware of it—he took children more seriously than adults, cared more about how they would judge him.)

The girl on the right plays a housewife on a slow boil; she holds a slapstick under her left arm, her right fist is set angrily on her right hip, and she glares at Pierrot, her little man. He sits on a huge rock in the center, his hands on his thighs, his legs too short to touch the ground; ignoring her, he sends us a look that says, "She'll go away soon." Behind the rock is a child who, in an oddly affecting gesture, holds his hand to his head and looks off to the side; there's a red glow on his face, and he seems weighed down by his thoughts. Completing the picture are two girls on the left, who sit one in front of the other;

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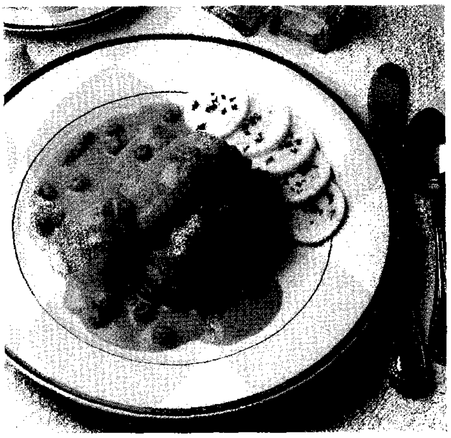
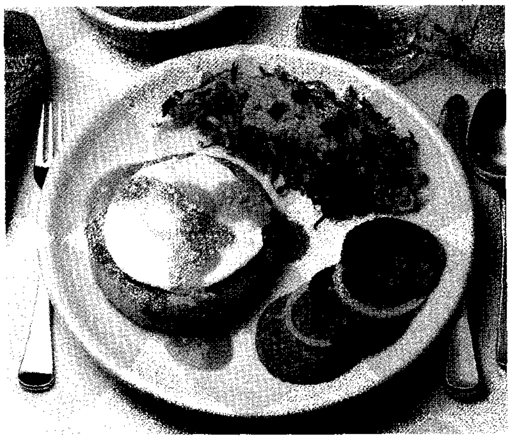
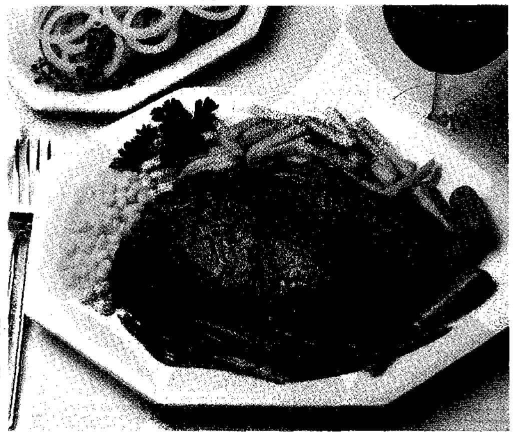

Picante de Ave. Boned chicken with paprika sauce.

Machas a la Parmesana. Pacific clams with white wine and cheese.


Yapingachos. Cheese-filled potato tortilla with egg and peanut sauce.

Langosta del Pacífico. Pacific lobster with mayonnaise.

Ajiaco. Chicken stew with potato, corn and capers.


Bife de Chorizo. Broiled Argentine beef served with Chimichurri sauce. (Parsley, garlic and oil)

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the girl in the foreground holds her hands together and her mouth is slightly open, and the girl behind her cranes her neck. They're so intent on Pierrot and his woman they're barely able to hold themselves together politely.

"Happy Age" makes a viewer believe that, for Watteau, Pierrot personified indifference—being part of a company of people and yet unconcerned with them. Seeing the Louvre's painting as a kind of monument to indifference may explain why it didn't appear in Jullienne's catalogues and why Watteau's other friends seem not to have known about it. Surely they would have mentioned it even if they didn't like it—it is different in scope from everything else he did. Could Watteau have kept "Pierrot" a secret from them? Perhaps he felt that they would be uncomfortable with, even dislike, its lack of painterly surface refinement—the very quality, presumably, he had conditioned them to look for in his work. Or perhaps he felt that they would see something confessional in it: a picture of an artist-clown who is plainly unconcerned with his friends and colleagues. Mightn't Watteau, in these Pierrot pictures, and most of all in the Louvre's picture, be portraying his own itinerant existence—his way of being with, and yet not with, his friends?

AND is it possible that in "Pierrot" he knew he had taken the motif of the spotlighted individual as far as he could, and felt free to go back to the motif of a group of people and show it as he truly saw it—as a gathering of total strangers? That is what a viewer believes when he turns from "Pierrot" to Watteau's second great work—and last picture—"Gersaint's Shopsign." Not that the process was a simple or immediate one for him. It's probable that he spent a year in London in between. His friends thought it perverse of him to have gone there in the first place; he seemed to want to hasten his death by spending so long in such a damp climate, and he came back in a deteriorated condition. But we know that when he returned, whether because he had "Pierrot" under his belt or because he knew that time was running out, he acted with a dictatorial assurance he had never shown before. It was he who insisted on making a sign for his friend Edme-François Gersaint's art gallery, on the Pont Notre-Dame, and on having it hung there. (Gersaint agreed reluctantly; he thought Watteau was wasting his time with a shop sign.) And though his health allowed him to paint only in the mornings, he finished this large picture—it is about five feet high by ten feet wide—in eight days.

The result was a breakthrough work: the most physically sumptuous painting he had ever made, his first picture with a city setting and a setting that feels as if it were a real place. It's also the first picture where, so his friends believed, he didn't go through the rigmarole of creating a composition from existing drawings. He painted directly from the model, and made the first figures about whom we feel, Oh, his contemporaries. Where the women in his *fêtes* tended to be so many shy, bemused, or self-possessed belles—prizes for men rather than persons in their own right—here they are formidable individuals. And where the men in his *fêtes* were often squirts or aging greasers, here they are, from one fellow to the next, angelic, handsome, and heroic—but always with an underlying comic twist. The men's faces, rendered with a dot-and-dash speed, make us smile, and yet each man is a separate personality.

"The Shopsign" might be called a day in the life of an art firm, compressed into one moment. Starting from the left, there is a young porter standing outside the shop—he looks on as one helper packs a portrait of the late Louis XIV in a crate and another moves a mirror off the wall. In the center, a woman with her back to us steps up from the curb and a man, already in the shop, offers her a gentlemanly hand. Next to them, a woman and a man, who also have their backs to us, scrunch over to appraise an oval painting, and, finally, at the right, three customers muse over a mirror being shown to them by, perhaps, Mme. Gersaint. "The Shopsign" is the flip side of "Pierrot." "Pierrot" is an endlessly fascinating image, but a viewer may wish it had a bit more of Watteau's hand, his satiny touch. "The Shopsign" is not an immediately compelling image; there is no one figure or action we're drawn to at first, and the setting—a shallow yet grandiose room, its walls hung with paintings—is hard to keep clear in your mind. It was a convention of the time, when making a portrait of an establishment, to leave out the fourth wall, so the viewer could look right in. But Watteau doesn't make his backdrop straightforwardly fake; he is a

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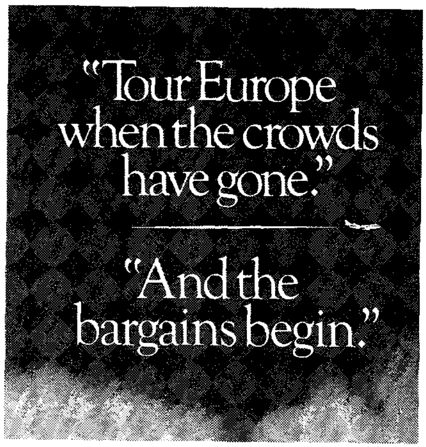
touch too realistic, and leaves us wondering where the doors might be, how this shop actually functions.

"The Shopsign" makes up for this uncenteredness, though, in its paint quality. It is one of the very few paintings where Watteau was able to get the breathing life of his drawings into paint. "The Shopsign" is, in effect, an enormous version of one of his three-color chalk drawings on light-brown paper. The painting's pervasive background color is a baked red-tan—a kind of aged burlap. On this background, the colors—lavender and pink, white and gray, rust red and pale green—appear to have settled, like a mist, and then been nudged into place by flecks of black. My favorite passage is the white sleeves of the shirt on the young man on the right; they might be described as two clouds that, blown about by different currents of air, happen to resemble the sleeves of a shirt. To appreciate these sleeves—or the equally amazing gray jacket of the man who bends, or the silvery-violet dress of the lady who enters, or the rippling white shirt of the packer—you need to get very close. And with your nose inches away from this large painting you find yourself doing exactly what the silly-looking man and woman who scrutinize the oval picture are doing. It's one of Watteau's jokes that he makes each of us into another prospective customer for M. Gersaint.

And the longer you stand before "The Shopsign" the more radical and right its lack of a center becomes. Watteau is so modest about the stories he's telling that it takes a while to realize that the painting is a vision of the unrelatedness of people and the simultaneousness of unrelated events. The picture is closer to Oriental screens in its structure than to anything in Western art, and it's exciting to realize that he evolved this scroll-like idea from the way he saw people. He showed separate incidents taking place at the same time in some of his *fêtes*, but, except for a rare work such as "The Two Cousins," he dissipated the effect by presenting the various individuals in the form of undulating, too graceful roundelays—he didn't keep them separate enough. He showed the unrelatedness of people in "Pierrot," too, where the figures beneath Pierrot might as well be in another painting. But we can't help seeing a connection between these figures, even if it takes the form of emotional unconnectedness. It is in many of his drawings, though, that he presents the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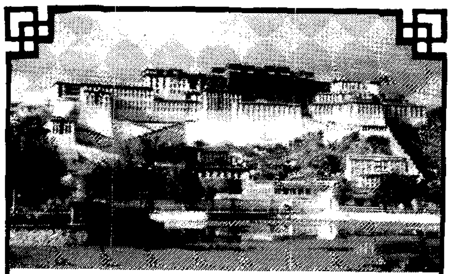

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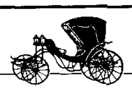

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idea of simultaneity most clearly. He no doubt worked spontaneously, and with pleasure, when he placed two, or eight—or twelve or more—separate faces (or faces, bodies, and gestures) on the same page, and kept them all floating side by side in perfect balance with each other.

With its clock and mirrors and its vignette of Louis XIV being packed away, and with our knowledge that Watteau died shortly after making it, "Gersaint's Shopsign" has been described as a painting about vanity and mortality. In his "Rococo to Revolution," Michael Levey has also said that the picture is about "the shop of the human heart"—a place where people themselves are the true objects of contemplation and desire. Watteau's literal subject, though, is the art world of his time, and seeing the picture that way ties it to "Pierrot." Between these paintings, he encompasses the two poles of every artist's thoughts. We go from an inside view of the artist himself—the isolated, edgy, swollen ego—to an inside view of the marketplace, that necessary second act of his life.

Probably no other painter has brought together so neatly both the pretentiousness and the genuine glamour of the art business. Watteau the satirist and reporter catches that sense of snobbish, knowing absorption with which virtually all people cloak themselves when they enter a gallery. He shows how everyone falls for it: the browsers, the professional collector-connoisseurs, the dealers, even the guys who move around and crate the stuff. And Watteau the poet shows how the marketplace is for the artist heaven and hell on earth—his chance to see what strangers and the future will do with his product. This room, where toilet articles and furnishings are sold alongside serious paintings in gilt frames, keeps changing its character as we look at it. It could pass as a great hall in a museum, a junk shop, a chamber fit for a palace, an auction house, or a stall. A viewer acquainted with Watteau's life may believe that the painter, a perennial guest, was also presenting his true idea of a home.

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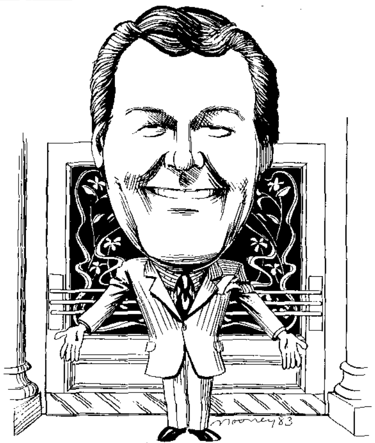

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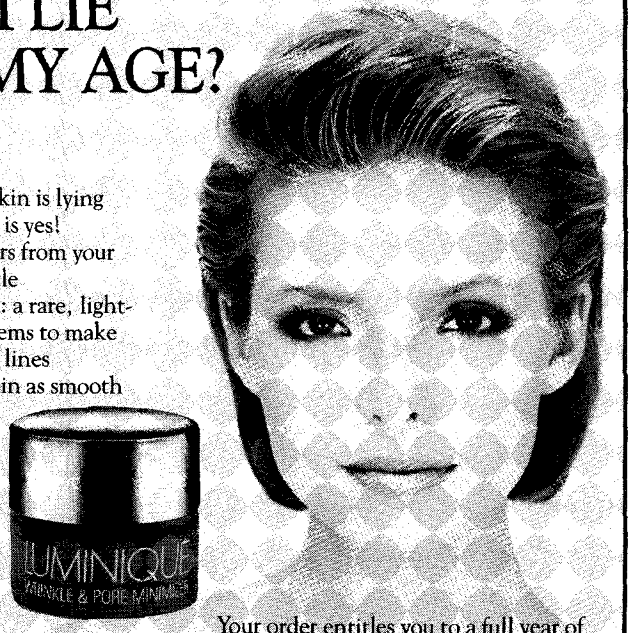

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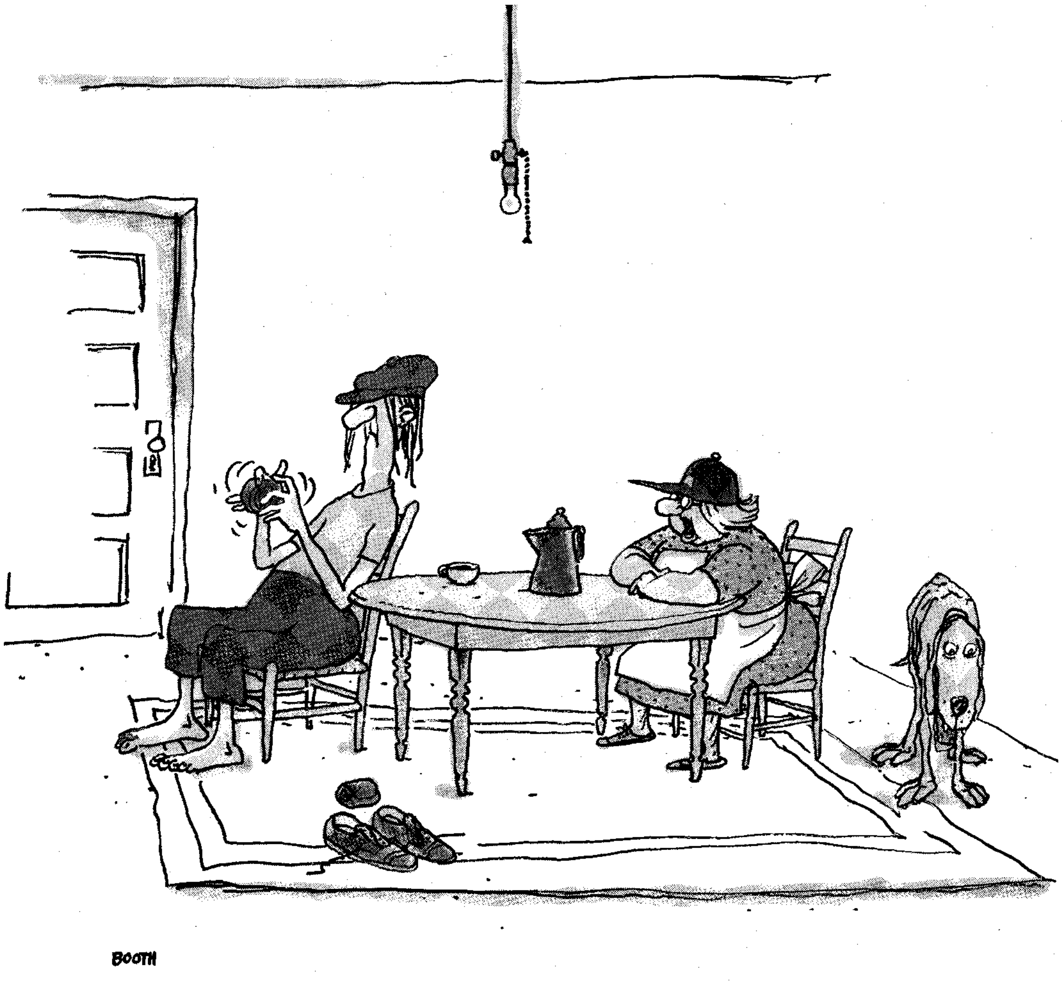
A Correspondence between two statesmen may conceal as much as it reveals. Their letters usually suggest, rather than represent, the relationship of the writers. The three volumes of "Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence," edited by Warren F. Kimball (Princeton; $150), are an exception. They are, in all probability, the most nearly complete record of the most voluminous correspondence that has ever been conducted between the leaders of two great nations—all of it through five years of a world war in which Churchill and Roosevelt were two of the four (the other two were Stalin and Hitler) principal figures. Not only for the English-speaking peoples but for the history of the world, the relationship of Churchill and Roosevelt was and continues to be even more important than the relationship of either of them with their difficult and distant ally Stalin. The Churchill-Roosevelt correspondence is not a contemplative one. It is a correspondence dealing with actions, decisions, immediate dangers and prospects: the record of two captains speaking to each other in the midst of the greatest storm that has beset Western civilization. Before the Second World War began, Churchill and Roosevelt had sent a few distant, cheerful messages to each other. Before the war ended, Roosevelt had died. But during the war—more precisely, between September 11, 1939, and April 11, 1945—they exchanged nearly two thousand letters and telegrams, of which Churchill wrote eleven hundred and sixty-one and Roosevelt seven hundred and eighty-eight. Some of these were printed, at least in part, in Churchill's extraordinary—extraordinary because of its compound of history and autobiography—"The Second World War," composed only a few years later. There have been other collections and editions of the Churchill-Roosevelt correspondence since that time, but it is only now that an exhaustive compilation has been achieved, whereby we have something like the complete picture: a huge packet of letters and messages which is a monument of the now passing civilization of the last five centuries—no less a monument than, say, the Colosseum in the age of Rome or the city of Paris in the modern age.

The reasons for such an admittedly startling statement are that no remotely similar correspondence between two great statesmen has occurred since, and that the likelihood of its occurring now is about equal to the likelihood of someone's writing a symphony in the manner of Beethoven. For many reasons, including the danger of the Germans' listening to or unscrambling telephonic communications, most of Churchill's and Roosevelt's exchanges were made in writing. Since then, all kinds of changes, cultural as well as technological, have reduced the necessity and the practice of such written communications between statesmen. Instead of the telephone, Churchill strenuously preferred the written word—though this was not always to his advantage. Like many of the great masters of language, he was inclined to trust the influence of his expressions unduly. He would dictate a message, putting his best efforts into phrasing his propositions strongly, clearly, including every possible argument and detail to sustain his thesis. Once he had expended his energy, care, and precision on the full statement of his propositions, a diminution of his resolution would sometimes follow—especially during the last two years of the war, when his physical strength and his capacity for concentration were weakening. From the beginning to the end of the war, Churchill drafted his letters and messages himself. Roosevelt, as the war went on, and as his health and energy began to fail, relied on the drafts of others (during the last two years of the war, as Professor Kimball's careful annotations show, we have the names of the draft-



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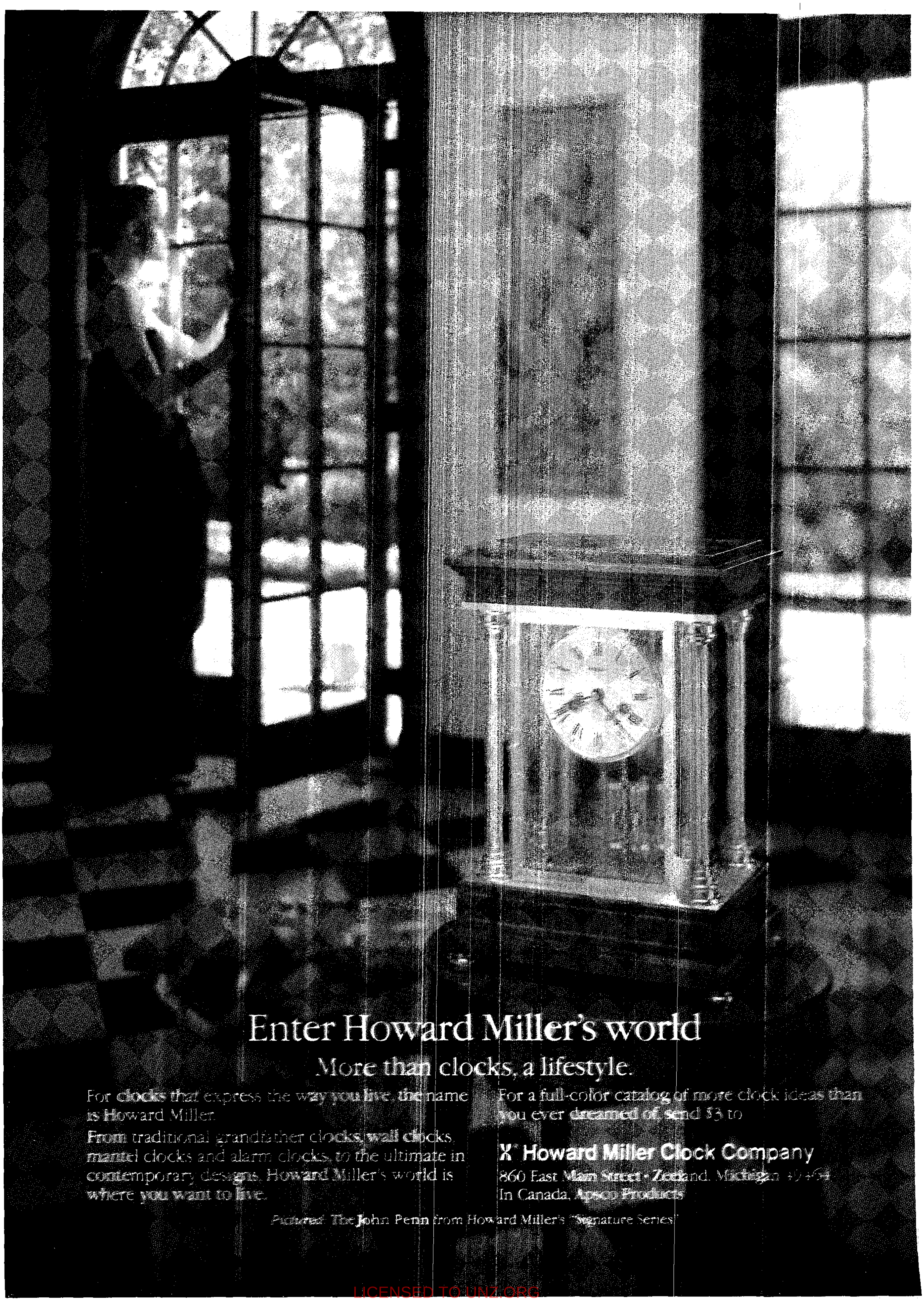

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ers). This made a difference, but, except in a few cases, probably not a decisive one.

Sometime in the fall of 1938—after the Munich "settlement" and more than three years before Pearl Harbor—Roosevelt began to offer his support, cautiously, privately, and secretly, to those persons in England and France who were opposed to the further appeasement of Hitler. Foremost among these men was Churchill. We have no evidence of any written communication between the two men during the year before the war broke out. Yet Roosevelt knew, like everyone else, that it was because of Churchill's record of warnings against Hitler that Chamberlain was compelled to invite Churchill into his War Cabinet as the First Lord of the Admiralty; and a few days later Roosevelt sent his first letter to Churchill, who responded eagerly to this friendly and powerful hand held out from the New World. Eight months later—by coincidence, on the very day that Hitler flung his armies forward into Holland, Belgium, and France—Churchill became Prime Minister. He knew that somehow, somewhere, at some time, the United States would have to come into the war on the side of Britain. Roosevelt knew it, too, though he would fain not admit it publicly to the American people. Even more important, Churchill knew that Roosevelt knew. Before the tremendous importance of this meeting of minds, everything else—including their disagreements and misunderstandings, and Roosevelt's later illusions about Stalin and Russia—pales. Without Roosevelt's support, the British would have had to make peace with Hitler, at the cost of accepting Germany's domination of all Europe, instead of going on fighting and accepting eventually the Soviet Union's domination of the more remote, eastern half of the Continent. I emphasize Europe, not the Far East, because this, too, was an essential element of Churchill's and Roosevelt's meeting of minds. Well before Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt realized that the defeat of Germany must have priority over the defeat of Japan; the second would follow the first. This American decision was not inevitable: there were many domestic and military pressures to the contrary. That Roosevelt saw eye to eye with Churchill on this was a blessing to Britain, to the United States, and to the world.

Both Churchill and Roosevelt were Naval Persons ("Former Naval Person" was the code name that Churchill used in his correspondence with Roosevelt during most of the war), but Roosevelt had an exaggerated confidence in the importance of naval power, which after four centuries was beginning to lessen. At the time of the collapse of France, Roosevelt tried to console the French Premier: naval power was still the key to war and history, he wrote. As late as 1941, he wrote to Churchill that "in the last analysis the Naval control of the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean will in time win the war." Yet by the time of the Second World War a motorized land army could move faster than a navy. The war had to be won on the continent of Europe. It would end in the middle of Germany, in the ruins of Berlin. A few days after Churchill had become Prime Minister, when Western Europe was falling before Hitler's blows, he realized what Roosevelt was thinking: if worst came to worst, the British fleet could sail away to the New World and join the American Navy to secure the western Atlantic. Churchill wrote Roosevelt that while *he* would never surrender, the American President should recognize that, with Hitler winning, and without the prospect of American help, a British Government might follow his whose single card in an eventual armistice settlement with Hitler would be the existence of an intact British fleet. Certain American historians, including Professor Kimball, have seen Churchill's warning as a sly attempt to keep his options open. No: at that moment Churchill was a supreme realist, forced to remind Roosevelt of the bleakest of all possibilities. After a few months, this misunderstanding between them melted away. Because of Hitler's reluctance to risk an invasion of Britain, and because of a greater assurance of American help, Churchill's leadership became secure, and the prospect of a Britain forced to seek an armistice with Hitler disappeared. By November, 1940, the Battle of Britain, at least in the air, had been won, and Franklin Roosevelt had been elected President for an unprecedented third term.

A few days after that election, Churchill drafted a letter to Roosevelt. (He wrote two long drafts before the final version.) Germany, he wrote, "reached the maximum industrial effort by the end of 1939." He was wrong: the German economy would accomplish miracles during the war, reaching its maximum effort four years later, in spite of the hail of bombs cast on Germany by overwhelming Anglo-American air power. He was not asking for "a large American Expeditionary Army." Whether he really meant that in 1940 we cannot tell; perhaps not. He saw ahead to a time when the English-speaking nations would govern the destinies of most of the world—a vision that he had espoused early in his life, and that accompanied him till the end of his days. "If we win victory, we shall have to assume the major responsibility for a new world order," he wrote. "If, however, our two countries are to be associated in defending freedom, and still more in rebuilding the world after the war, neither of them should be placed in the position of being the suppliant client of the other." Yet this was exactly what happened: as the war went on, Churchill's Britain became more and more dependent on the power and wealth of Roosevelt's United States. Also—second in order, though not in importance—was a condition that neither Churchill nor Roosevelt could foresee in 1940: for all the wealth and the sea and air predominance of the Anglo-American forces, they would not be able to defeat the Third Reich by themselves, without the primitive might of Russia. It was Hitler's attack on Russia, mounted on the pretext and in the name of anti-Communism, that eventually achieved the survival of Britain and the world leadership of the United States.

Churchill and Roosevelt learned this fast. It explains their forbearance toward Russian demands, including ones that it was impossible for them to fulfill. It explains even more their enormous respect for and trust in Stalin, expressed in the—in retrospect, strangely flowery—language of their telegrams and toasts to him. But as the end of the war approached, Churchill's and Roosevelt's views of Stalin and Russia diverged. That Russia would share the spoils of victory over Germany in Europe was inevitable. What was not inevitable was the extent—extent, rather than nature—of

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the Russian dominion over most of Eastern and parts of Central Europe: in sum, the origins of the Cold War. In the last sentences of his introduction, Professor Kimball writes that Churchill "had simply replaced the evil of Nazi Germany with the evil of the Soviet Union. Regardless of whether he was right about the Soviets, Churchill failed to acknowledge that the invariable price of victory is the collapse of wartime alliances, no matter how strong the personal bonds." This interpretation is too simple. The de-facto Anglo-American alliance survived the war; it exists even now. More important: it is not a negligible matter that Churchill's view of the Soviets and his proposals for dealing with them were more realistic than Roosevelt's. Their correspondence provides ample evidence of this. There were many elements in Roosevelt's wish to dissociate himself from Churchill as the war drew on. Roosevelt trusted in his own charm: he believed, and said, that he could handle Stalin better than most people could, including Churchill. He wanted Stalin to join in the war against Japan. He wanted to avoid any American entanglement in the politics of Central and Eastern Europe. He thought that the American people would not stand for a protracted stay of American troops in Europe after the war. He thought that getting Stalin's Russia into the United Nations was worth a pretty price. Some of these considerations may have been reasonable at the time; others were not. Underlying them were personal inclinations that proved to be decisive. One was Roosevelt's habit of procrastinating, his unwillingness to confront certain problems—a practice that sometimes worked for him in domestic politics but became more and more pronounced as he declined in strength and health.

Roosevelt's increasing wish to distance himself from Churchill during the last three years of the war requires further explanation. For a long time, their exceptional relationship prevailed. It is interesting—this emerges, from small, personal items, perhaps for the first time in this edition of their correspondence—that their affection may have reached its zenith in 1942; that is, after Churchill had become very much the junior partner in their alliance. They met first on warships off Newfoundland in August, 1941, and again in Washington after Pearl Harbor. That second meeting took place under the shadow of many disastrous British reverses, but somehow their personal friendship solidified then. Even the fact that neither Elliott Roosevelt nor Mrs. Roosevelt particularly liked Churchill did not make much difference. It was, after all, in 1942 that Roosevelt wrote Churchill, "It is fun to be in the same decade with you." And, indeed—perhaps because of their unique relationship—in 1942, and even for some part of 1943, Churchill could have his way. He succeeded in persuading Roosevelt and the American high military command that their proposed invasion of France in late 1942 would be a disaster. He succeeded in persuading them a year later that the Allied victory in North Africa should be followed by an invasion of Sicily and of the Italian mainland. Even Roosevelt's strictures of and proposals against British rule in India did not make much difference: the President dropped the issue, without Churchill's having to make much fuss about it. But then there came a change—slowly, imperceptibly, but definitely. By the time of the Teheran summit (the first one between the Big Three), it had crystallized. Roosevelt tried his best—and, at times, his worst—to distance himself from Churchill: to indicate to Stalin that he had no special relationship with Churchill, that he was in the middle between his two great allies, as in the course of history progressive America was marching in the middle between a pioneer egalitarian Soviet Union and the older, in many ways admirable, but essentially outdated reactionary Britain. And when, in 1944, Churchill pleaded with Roosevelt to exploit the campaign in Italy and move some of the Anglo-American forces in the direction of Vienna, to take up the problem of Poland before it became too late, to settle something about the future of the Danubian states before the Russians occupied and possessed them, to make use of the situation when—finally—the Anglo-American armies were moving across Germany faster than the Russians, Roosevelt refused. Before the Yalta summit, Churchill wrote Roosevelt, "This may well be a fateful conference, coming at a moment when the great allies are so divided and the shadow of the war lengthens out before us. At the present time I think the end of this war may well prove to be more disappointing than was the last." Roosevelt did not see it this way. He refused to confer

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with Churchill before Yalta, save for a few hours in Malta Harbor. There Churchill wrote that it was "undesirable that more of Western Europe than necessary should be occupied by the Russians." But Roosevelt did not want to discuss that.

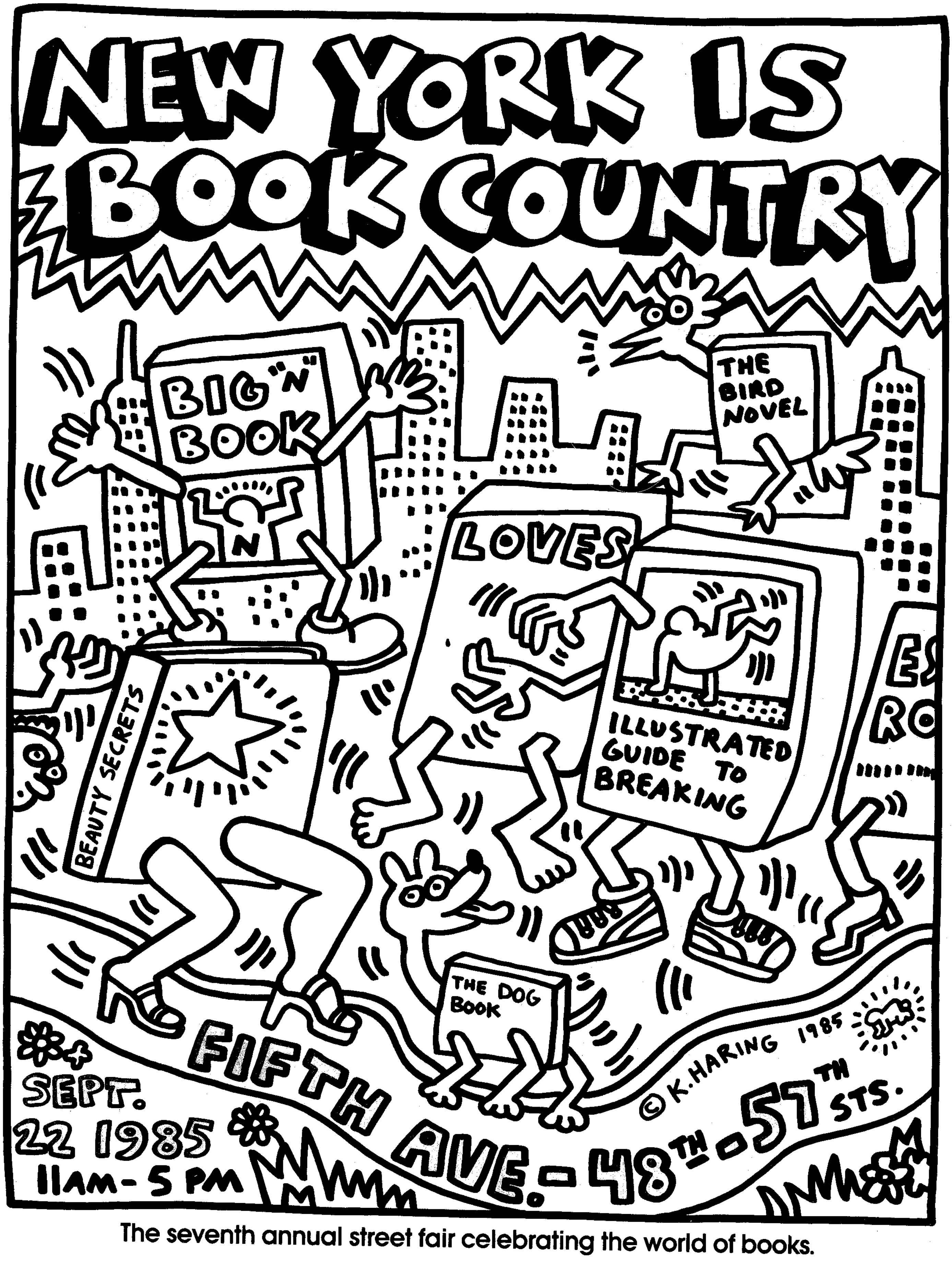
By early April, 1945, the problems posed by Stalin's behavior had become acute. There is a telegram, one of the very last, that Roosevelt sent to Churchill from Warm Springs six days before he died. He said that he was "pleased with your very clear strong message to Stalin. . . . Our Armies will in a very few days be in a position that will permit us to become 'tougher' than has heretofore appeared advantageous to the war effort."

For many years, this telegram has been cited by defenders of Roosevelt who—especially during the ugly years of the McCarthy period—wanted to prove that if Roosevelt had lived he would have turned to resist Communist aggressiveness as rapidly and as forcefully as his successor, Harry Truman, did. We now know that this is not true. The message was drafted by Admiral Leahy, the person on the President's staff who did not like the Russians. (He was also suspicious of the British.) The message, Professor Kimball says, "was sent back from Warm Springs to Washington without comment in only one hour and twenty-eight minutes, hardly time enough for Roosevelt to have reconsidered and redirected the entire thrust of his wartime and postwar policy toward the Soviet Union. In fact, one wonders if the President gave this message any consideration at all, particularly in view of his poor health."

Churchill gave the title "Triumph and Tragedy" to the last volume of his war memoirs. Tragedy: because the war ended with such an unnatural division of Europe that the confrontation between West and East began almost immediately. Not unnaturally, the word "tragedy" does not figure in the titles of the American or Russian memoirists of the war. Yet Churchill did not wish to profit from his record by telling Americans "I told you so." When he was finishing the last volume of his war memoirs, he wrote a personal letter to President Eisenhower. He promised that he would underemphasize in his book his differences with the Americans at the end of the war.

Churchill insisted that his affection for the United States, his gratefulness for the American alliance, and the memory of Franklin Roosevelt were as strong as ever. With every reason. Churchill, because of his courage and leadership, proved to be the savior of Britain (and perhaps of much that remains of Western civilization) in 1940; but he could not have prevailed without Roosevelt's support. He never forgot that, and not merely for political reasons. It is perhaps regrettable that many Americans—including Roosevelt, Mrs. Roosevelt, their circle, and all kinds of historical writers since that time—attributed to Churchill calculations and schemes of political strategy of which Americans had to be suspicious. In reality, it was the aristocratic Churchill who, in his relationship with Roosevelt, was the more open, more emotional, more romantic, less reserved, and less suspicious. When their relationship was at its best, Roosevelt could respond with a generous sense of camaraderie and humor. Of course, Churchill was the better writer, but there were moments when his easy high spirits affected Roosevelt, too. Once in a while, a Roosevelt message ends with a flat and undistinguished Americanism: "Keep up the good work." But there is that occasion when Roosevelt is skeptical of Churchill's high-flown idea of supporting the cause of Basic English across the world: "Incidentally, I wonder what the course of history would have been if in May 1940 you had been able to offer the British people only 'blood, work, eye water and face water,' which I understand is the best that Basic English can do with five famous words." It is one of the few instances in which the practical Roosevelt scores a rhetorical point against the idealist Churchill.

Many Americans, having read the first, hurried newspaper accounts of these solid volumes, seem to have been surprised that there indeed were disagreements between Churchill and Roosevelt. Yet more important than such details is the very nature of Churchill's and Roosevelt's relationship. Their extraordinary understandings and their—alas, expectable and therefore less extraordinary—misunderstandings led to the world in which we even now live, twenty years after Churchill's death and forty years after Roosevelt's. Nothing that has happened in the world since compares even remotely with the events and the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consequences of the Second World War, in the shadow of which we still find ourselves, and well before the end of which Churchill and Roosevelt knew that they would have to divide Europe and Germany with Stalin, because they would have to divide their nations' victory over Hitler with Soviet Russia: there was no other way. This is a hard fact, conveniently forgotten by those—and they are in charge of our destinies for the time being—who see the history of this century as a protracted struggle between "capitalism" and "Communism" and also by those who see the Second World War as the Good War, in which the destruction of the mad Hitler by the democratic forces of decency was a foregone conclusion. It wasn't. Had it not been for Churchill and Roosevelt, neither of them a politician typical of his people at the time—had it not been for their extraordinary meeting of minds, we would be living in a very different world, one perhaps so different as to be hardly imaginable.

—JOHN LUKACS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

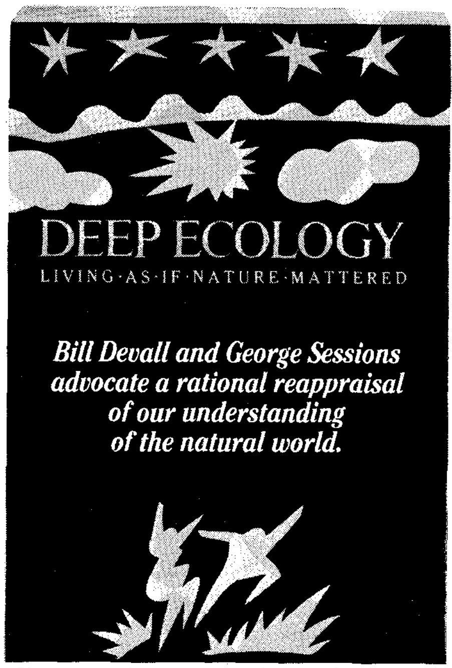
TROUBLE IN PARADISE, by Pierre Boulle, translated from the French by Patricia Wolf (Vanguard; $12.95). This amusingly cynical three-part parable about the paradox of three-part monotheism begins with a séance, proceeds to a series of sectarian discourses, and concludes with a Second Assumption. In Part One, the Holy Spirit escorts Mary from Heaven to France; their mission is to negotiate a consensus among the rival factions of the faithful, who are to blame for the rivalry between Father and Son which is making life in Heaven hell. Mr. Boulle also has the Spirit (using an open-minded astrophysicist as a medium) present a synopsis of twenty centuries of councils, synods, heresies, and schisms. In Part Two, titled "The Cocktail Party," he opens the floor to theologians, including a Jesuit and a rabbi. In Part Three, Mary, who has switched from Aramaic to fluent French, and now displays a Legion of Honor ribbon on a low-cut custom-designed blue gown, gives her admirers someone to worship, and gives God and His Son something besides each other to worry about.

THE ILLUSTRATED ZULEIKA DOBSON, by Max Beerbohm (Yale; $19.95). "Zuleika Dobson: Or, An Oxford Love Story," Max Beerbohm's only novel, was first published, in 1911, in an edition without pictures, because the author disapproved of illustrated novels. For his own copy, however, he swallowed his objections and—following a lifelong predilection for embellishing and improving on published works—made watercolor drawings and caricatures to illustrate the adventures of Zuleika Dobson on her memorable visit to Oxford during Eights Week as the guest of her grandfather, the Warden of Judas College. This is a facsimile of Beerbohm's personal copy, complete with the drawings and other little conceits he pasted into it for his and his friends' delectation. It is a lovely piece of bookmaking, and, despite its author's animadversions on the illustrated novel, the pictures add enormously to the pleasure we take in his elegantly stylized satire. We see the bewitching Zuleika, the penniless governess who took Europe and America by storm. We see the dandified fourteenth Duke of Dorset as he throws himself into the Thames for unrequited love of the lady (to be followed, for the same reason, by the entire corps of undergraduates). And there is a wonderful full-page watercolor of Dorset's father walking in the Bois and *not* cutting Louis Napoleon as he rides by (for which the Emperor awarded the Duke a French title).

NOTE: "Return Trips," a collection of short stories by Alice Adams, has been published by Knopf ($14.95). Some of the stories originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

GOSSIP, by Patricia Meyer Spacks (Knopf; $18.95). A wandering academic treatise in which the author, a professor of English at Yale, addresses the significance of not so idle chatter as it appears in published letters, in novels, in biography, and in everyday life (a West Indian village as well as the gesellschaft of Washington cocktail parties is touched on), and from these illustrations extrapolates sociological and economic analyses of the purposes served when people talk about each other. Professor Spacks is a feminist, and when this vision informs her prose the book is at its best: the reader is obliged not only with an enticing subject but with a unifying theme—how women, and other tra-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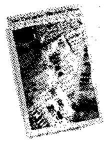

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ditionally subservient classes, have "gossiped" as a way of creating their own society, based on its own loyalties and social assumptions. The rest of the book, which hovers around long portions of quoted material, suffers from the disorganized, inconclusive tone of many conversations. The main issue—how gossip in its broadest sense differs from other exchanges of information about an absent party—remains unclear.

To the Halls of the Montezumas: The Mexican War in the American Imagination, by Robert W. Johannsen (Oxford; $25). Most of the powers of Europe expected the Mexicans to win the war with the United States, because their Army was larger and had more trained men and professional officers. Americans were fearful until a string of victories over numerically superior forces, as astonishing as it was thrilling, made them jubilant. Mr. Johannsen's study helps us imagine ourselves as we were—a David to the Mexican Goliath, and a nation permeated by romanticism. Science was as much a part of the era as romance: the sight of Aztec ruins inspired wonder, but it also spurred American ethnology, and botany and zoology gained from the study of unfamiliar flora and fauna, as soldiers and specialists alike collected in the field. (Many sent birds back to the aging Audubon.) It was a time of technological innovation—new printing presses, the telegraph, and the daguerreotype made this the best-reported war so far in American history. Soldiers and civilians shared an enormous rise in national self-confidence, to the point where Americans regarded the revolutions of 1848 in Europe as a sign that American republican ideals were overtaking monarchy. Mr. Johannsen finds that opposition to the war was not very widespread. Many contemporary pacifists trusted in American high-mindedness and supported this conflict in the belief that, in effect, the war with Mexico was the war to end all wars.

Perfect Symmetry, by Heinz R. Pagels (Simon & Schuster; $18.95). There have been any number of recent books about the early universe and its connection with the physics of elementary particles. This is one of the best. Mr. Pagels is a physicist who has worked on some of the more outré aspects of the subject,

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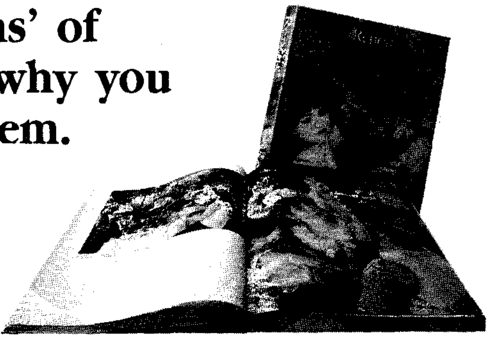

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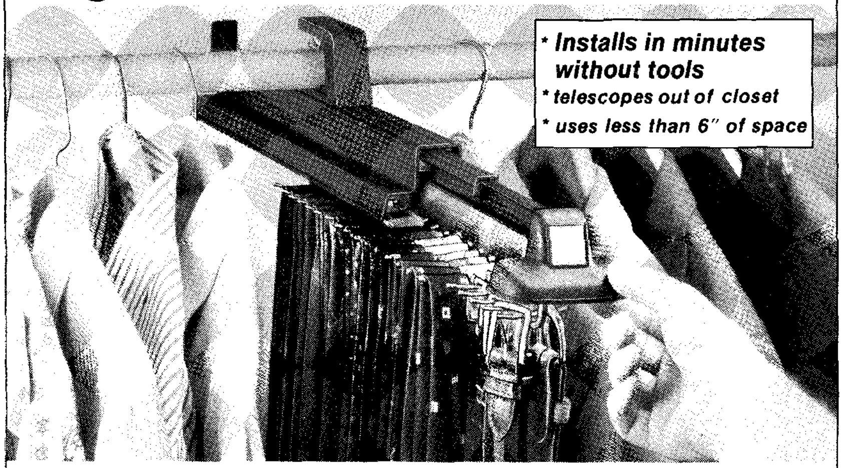
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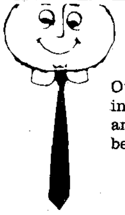

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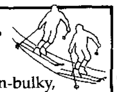

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and he has the advantage of knowing which speculations are to be taken seriously and which make little or no sense. The book is enlivened with both personal and historical anecdotes, and it should be accessible to any interested reader. Mr. Pagels demonstrates that if a science writer really knows what he is talking about—has the subject matter in his bones—he can explain the most complicated material in a simple and attractive way.

NOTE: "Moonshine," Alec Wilkinson's report on the North Carolina revenue agent Garland Bunting, has been published by Knopf ($13.95). Nearly all the contents first appeared in *The New Yorker.*

MYSTERY AND CRIME

FIELD OF BLOOD, by Gerald Seymour (Norton; $14.95). This is Mr. Seymour's eighth novel, and the best—much the best—since "Harry's Game," his first. Like that brilliant introduction, it is set in Northern Ireland. The story centers on the arrest—for the assassination of a judge and two detectives—of a pathetic Provo named Sean Pius McAnally and on his wavering willingness to save himself from a long prison term by turning informer. The chief figure in this operation is a young English Army lieutenant whose job it is to gain McAnally's confidence and steel him to appear in court against his former leaders. Other characters include McAnally's wife and three small children, a police detective, and a Provo determined to silence McAnally by killing the English lieutenant. The scene is Belfast at its bleakest, most impoverished, most politically fanatic. Mr. Seymour does not take sides. He makes no attempt to redeem McAnally. But he succeeds only too well in picturing the hopeless and horrifying Irish civil war. There are moments here that explode with an almost heart-stopping suspense.

•

Other leading singers include the baritone Scott Reeve as Tom, Minette's ill-fated true love; Michael Myers, a tenor, as her aging husband; the bass Kurt Link as the villainous nephew Arnold; the soubrette Kathryn Gamberoni as a sweet mouse who rises up righteously at the end, and James Ramlet, a very funny comic bass who plays two rolls with equal panache.

—*John Rockwell in the Times.*

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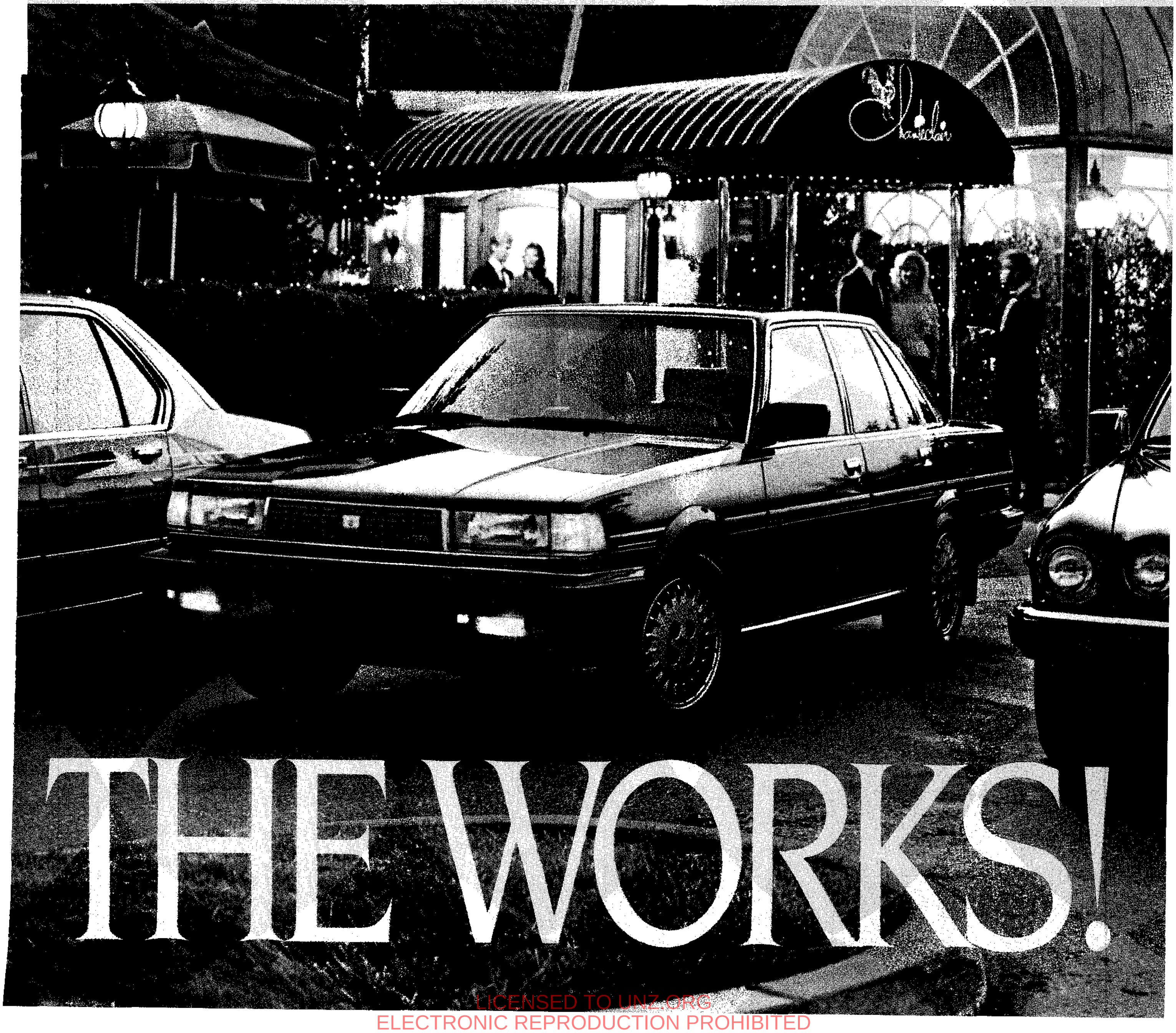

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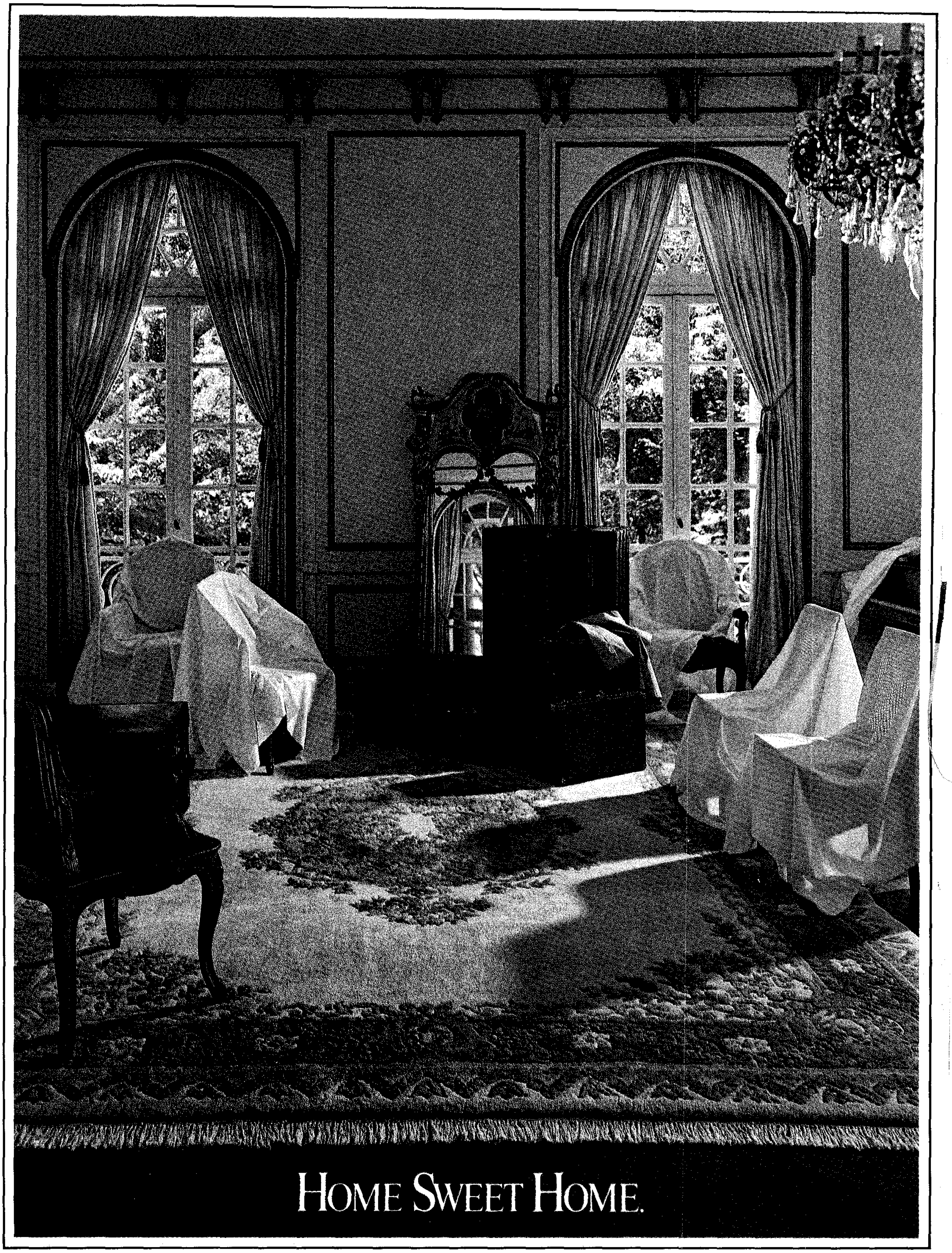

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